REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE			Form Approved OMB No. 0704-0188

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1. REPORT DATE *(DD-MM-YYYY)* 12-06-2009	2. REPORT TYPE Master's Thesis	3. DATES COVERED *(From - To)* 21-07-2008 to 12-06-2009
4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE Organizational and Structural Reform: Transforming the United States Government for 21st Century Contingencies		**5a. CONTRACT NUMBER**
		5b. GRANT NUMBER
		5c. PROGRAM ELEMENT NUMBER
6. AUTHOR(S) Richard S. Daum, Colonel, USA		**5d. PROJECT NUMBER**
		5e. TASK NUMBER
		5f. WORK UNIT NUMBER
7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) Joint Forces Staff College Joint Advanced Warfighting School 7800 Hampton Blvd. Norfolk, VA 23511-1702		**8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER** JFSC 25789
9. SPONSORING / MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)		**10. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S ACRONYM(S)**
		11. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S REPORT NUMBER(S)

12. DISTRIBUTION / AVAILABILITY STATEMENT
Approved for public release, distribution is unlimited

13. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES

14. ABSTRACT
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15. SUBJECT TERMS
National Security System, Interagency, Whole of Government, U.S. Government Reform

16. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF:			17. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT	18. NUMBER OF PAGES	19a. NAME OF RESPONSIBLE PERSON: Ms. Stacey Newman
a. REPORT Unclassified	**b. ABSTRACT** Unclassified	**c. THIS PAGE** Unclassified	Unclassified Unlimited	121	**19b. TELEPHONE NUMBER** *(include area code)* 910-635-8748

JOINT FORCES STAFF COLLEGE
JOINT ADVANCED WARFIGHTING SCHOOL

ORGANIZATIONAL AND STRUCTURAL REFORM:
Transforming the United States Government for 21st Century Contingencies

by

Richard S. Daum

Colonel, United States Army

A paper submitted to the Faculty of the Joint Advanced Warfighting School in partial satisfaction of the requirements of a Master of Science Degree in Joint Campaign Planning and Strategy.

The contents of this paper reflect my own personal views and are not necessarily endorsed by the Joint Forces Staff College or the Department of Defense.

Signature: _____

April 3, 2009

Thesis Advisor: Dr. Bob Antis, JFSC

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Abstract

Nearly twenty years after the end of the Cold War, an analysis of successful and failed overseas operations leaves little doubt the United States must do better if it is to retain its position of power and influence in world affairs. Even after years of focused effort against transnational terrorism, full-scale wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, and numerous smaller-scale interventions including Somalia, Haiti and Bosnia, the United States struggles to integrate its available resources in a common, unified manner. Simply put, the national security system designed at the end of World War II is not responsive, flexible or sufficiently adaptable to ensure success today or for the near future.

The thesis of this paper is that the United States must develop and implement organizational and structural reform to ensure unity of effort in complex contingencies overseas. It requires new organizations and leaders empowered with the authority to integrate and direct interagency resources in ways that employ all the elements of national power in a coordinated, comprehensive strategy. Based on an analysis of common problems in recent interventions, this paper identifies desirable organizational characteristics to ensure greater unity of effort. Then, from an examination of current proposals to change the way the United States organizes for complex contingencies, the paper recommends a new structure based on regionally aligned organizations led by senior civilian representatives of the president empowered with directive authority over all departments and agencies involved in complex contingencies. A "Regional Affairs Center," as the centerpiece of a new national security structure, provides the best option to integrate the interagency team at all levels and to provide optimal direction and authority where the next emerging crisis or complex contingency is likely to begin.

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"We need an overarching strategy to deal coherently with threatening, unstable parts of the world…a national security strategy that redefines our role in the new century, defines our goals, and shapes our national organizations to achieve those goals."[1]

General Anthony Zinni (USMC Retired)
Former Commander United States Central Command

Chapter 1: The Case for Unified Action in Complex Contingencies

General Zinni's assessment reflects what many today see as a clarion call for transformation within the United States Government to better define the way the nation thinks about strategy and organizes for complex contingencies worldwide. Notwithstanding a number of complementary, even critical initiatives, it is within the area of organization and structures that the government can make the greatest strides toward developing a more capable and effective United States response to emerging crises. Therefore, the thesis of this paper is the United States must develop and implement organizational and structural reform that ensures unity of effort in complex contingencies overseas—new organizations and leaders empowered with the authority to integrate and direct interagency resources in ways that employ all the elements of national power in a coordinated, comprehensive strategy.

Nearly twenty years after the end of the Cold War, an analysis of American successful and failed operations around the world leaves little doubt the United States must do better if it is to retain its position of power and influence in world affairs. Scholars and practitioners, inside and outside of government, both civilian and military,

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[1] Anthony Zinni and Tony Koltz, *The Battle for Peace: A Frontline Vision of America's Power and Purpose* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), 9.

have written about the United States' inability to focus all its elements of national power

in a well-planned, comprehensive approach to emerging challenges and rapidly changing

crises. Even after years of focused effort against transnational terrorism, full-scale wars

in Afghanistan and Iraq, and numerous smaller-scale interventions including Somalia,

Haiti and Bosnia, the United States continues to struggle to integrate all its available

resources in a common, unified manner. The Project on National Security Reform in its

comprehensive study of the national security system clearly defines the consequences of

failure and the underlying problem:

> *"The U.S. position of world leadership, our country's prosperity and*
> *priceless freedoms, and the safety of our people are challenged not only by*
> *a profusion of new and unpredictable threats, but by the now undeniable*
> *fact that the national security system of the United States is increasingly*
> *misaligned with a rapidly changing global security environment."*[2]

Clear Warning Signs

Given the United States' inconsistent performance in recent overseas

interventions, warnings of impending danger and loss of American influence emanate

from all directions indicating the nation must improve its response to ensure success in

future conflicts. The Congressional Research Service in a 2008 report to Congress states,

"In the view of many defense and foreign affairs analysts, these operations *[Iraq and*

Afghanistan] revealed deep flaws in the ability of the U.S. government to make timely

decisions, to develop prioritized strategies and integrated plans, to resource those efforts,

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[2] James R. Locher et al., *Project on National Security Reform: Forging a New Shield* (Arlington, VA: Center for the Study of the Presidency, November 2008), i.

and to effectively coordinate and execute complex missions."[3] Additionally, the Center

for Strategic and International Studies aptly summarizes the United States' record of

accomplishment during the last two decades when it states, "In numerous operations, the

United States has been unable to bring to bear all of its instruments of national power—

political, economic, military, and informational—in a coherent and effective campaign….

And in all of these cases, the U.S. government simply lacked the unity of effort necessary

to achieve its strategic goals and objectives."[4] In summary, the common denominator in

most of these failures is that it is uncommon for all elements of the United States

Government to work together.

Due to the nature of the current national security system, the United States

increasingly resorts to a single element of power during a crisis with minimal perceptible

integration of the other tools. Too often, that single tool is the military. In fact, some

critics argue that United States foreign policy and engagement is overly military-centric

with little integration of diplomatic and economic means. The result is significant

damage to the nation's reputation and influence worldwide. "One opinion poll after

another has demonstrated that America's reputation, standing, and influence are at all-

time lows, and possibly sinking further. There is little question that America's

diminished standing abroad has meant that the United States has had increased difficulty

in accomplishing its goals."[5] Yet, most departments within the federal government lack

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[3] U.S. Congressional Research Service Report for Congress, *Organizing the U.S. Government for National Security: Overview of the Interagency Reform Debates*, Catherine Dale, Nina Serafino and Pat Towell (Washington: Government Printing Office, April 18, 2008), 2.
[4] Clark A. Murdock and Michele A. Flournoy, *Beyond Goldwater-Nichols: U.S. Government and Defense Reform for a New Strategic Era, Phase 2 Report* (Washington: Center for Strategic and International Studies, July 2005), 43.
[5] Richard L. Armitage and Joseph S. Nye, *CSIS Commission on Smart Power: A Smarter, More Secure America* (Washington, DC: Center for Strategic and International Studies, 2007), 17-19.

the people, training and resources necessary for expeditionary deployment to worldwide points of conflict. In addition, most federal departments do not possess the cultural aspects for planning, operations and assessments that are essential for national security-related missions. "Where there is a vacuum in providing the nonmilitary services that are so necessary to the success of the overall operation, most often the U.S. military is called upon to fill it."[6]

If the United States is to continue its leadership on the world stage, the thesis of this paper is that it must transform the current national security system and its organizations to better resource overseas contingencies through a whole of government approach. The military should not be the United States' preeminent source of national power nor should it be the de facto arbiter of American foreign policy. Secretary of Defense Robert Gates articulates this point clearly regarding the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan when he states, "…we also understand that over the long term, we cannot kill or capture our way to victory. Where possible, kinetic operations should be subordinate to measures that promote better governance, economic programs to spur development, and efforts to address the grievances among the discontented from which the terrorists recruit."[7]

This point is appropriate for the broader effort against transnational threats as well as other overseas crises that affect America's national interests. The Rand Corporation affirms this in a recent study of government and defense reform where it states, "Today's challenges—such as winning the global war on terror and slowing the proliferation of

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[6] Robert E. Hunter, Edward Gnehm, and George Joulwan, *Integrating Instruments of Power and Influence: Lessons Learned and Best Practices* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2008), 18.
[7] Robert M. Gates, "The National Defense Strategy: Striking the Right Balance," *Joint Force Quarterly*, no. 52 (1st Quarter 2009): 3.

weapons of mass destruction—require multifaceted security strategies that take advantage of capabilities from across the full spectrum of national security agencies."[8] Nonetheless, there is little question the current national security system does not adequately address complex contingencies through a whole of government approach. The reason lies in the original design of the current system.

Flawed by Design

The root causes of American problems in overseas interventions begin at the national level. "Our nation's confusion about our role in the world is magnified by our failure to organize ourselves appropriately to achieve our goals there."[9] Simply put, the national security system designed at the end of World War II is not responsive, flexible or sufficiently adaptable to ensure success today or for the near future. Central to the government's inability to respond and adapt effectively, is an inability to integrate the efforts of all the departments and agencies. Given the challenges the United States faced between 1947 and 1989, the national security departments and agencies could execute their core functions reasonably well on their own or with minimal assistance from the intelligence community. "But when a contingency required not the sequential but the *simultaneous* integration of military, diplomatic and other assets of American power, the outcome was often suboptimal, and occasionally, as with the Vietnam War, an acutely

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[8] Murdock and Flournoy, *Beyond Goldwater-Nichols Phase 2 Report*, 26.
[9] Zinni and Koltz, *Battle for Peace*, 129.

damaging one."[10] The core problem then appears to be one of unity of effort and the means to achieve unified action simultaneously during complex contingencies.

However, centralized decision-making and stove-piped federal bureaucracies in Washington, D.C. create dysfunction that translates directly to the field in ways that exacerbate efforts to further national security interests. Ad hoc organizational structures, unclear lines of authority, resource constraints, and deep cultural divisions among federal departments and agencies create suboptimal conditions for success at the operational and tactical level more often than not, and in some cases contribute to outright failure. In those instances where the United States achieves success, it is usually the result of trial and error learning over time, usually at great expense. Occasionally the nation achieves success due to the collaboration of extraordinary leaders who, by the sheer force of their personalities, drive dissimilar organizations forward in common purpose. Such was the case with the United States' initial intervention into Somalia in 1993 when, despite unclear objectives and unclear lines of authority, the United States ambassador and military commander in Somalia established a working environment that allowed their staffs to coordinate and integrate diplomatic and military efforts for unified action.

However, due to the design of the current national security system and its organizational structures, success is not the usual outcome of recent interventions as evidenced by the later stages of the American involvement in Somalia, post-war stabilization in Iraq, and the continuing challenges in Afghanistan. The ad hoc nature of

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[10] Locher, *Project on National Security Reform*, ii.

United States responses to complex contingencies prevents the system and its organizations from learning from its mistakes and improving its performance over time.[11]

The effort to integrate the activities of the departments and agencies within the federal government during contingency operations is commonly termed "the interagency process." However, a building consensus suggests this process is broken. In fact, one might argue that the interagency process does not exist at all. The national security system in its current form, largely a result of the Defense Reorganization Act of 1947, is not an integrated team, but an assembly of separate, stove-piped organizations individually responsible for planning and executing specific portions of US policy. A recent report by the Congressional Research Service states, "The 'outdated bureaucratic superstructure' of the 20th century is an inadequate basis for protecting the nation from 21st century security challenges, critics contend, and the system itself, or alternatively, some of its key components, requires revision."[12] Therefore, any meaningful change to the current national security system must address ways to eliminate stove-piped functions and integrate action across the whole of government.

Yet, it is not enough to eliminate stove-piped functions at the national level. An integrated, whole of government approach must extend into the field at all levels of execution. One of the key findings in the PNSR study contends that complex challenges associated with the new strategic environment require a more extensive, skillful approach to national security including more interagency collaboration at the national, regional, and multilateral levels.[13] Therefore, changes to the national security system designed to

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[11] Murdock and Flournoy, *Beyond Goldwater-Nichols Phase 2 Report*, 43.
[12] CRS Report, *Overview of the Interagency Reform Debates*, 1.
[13] Locher, *Project on National Security Reform*, 3.

integrate action across the whole of government must do so at all echelons from the national level to the regional level and the point of execution.

However, little incentive exists in the current national security system to encourage or even compel cross-departmental collaboration and coordination. The result at the national level is often an incoherent strategy that is uncoordinated, poorly resourced, and poorly communicated to the field. Consequently, multiple departments and agencies simultaneously attempt to execute their field missions independently, as they understand them, but without a common vision or authority to ensure unified action. The Center for Strategic and International Studies captures this issue succinctly:

> *"At the end of the day, unity of effort across the U.S. government is not just about being more efficient or even more effective in operations. It can determine whether the United States succeeds or fails in a given intervention. It can also determine whether the ultimate costs of success – both dollars spent and lives lost or forever changed – are as low as possible or higher than necessary. In this sense, unity of effort is not just something that is nice to have; it is imperative."*[14]

Structural Reform to Forge Ahead

This study examines a number of structural proposals from practitioners, scholars, and think tanks inside and outside of government, in order to suggest how to change the way the United States organizes for complex contingencies overseas. It also recommends a desirable approach to "operationalize" national strategy. The paper begins with a brief study of the current national security system, the strategic environment within it operates, and the traditional approaches to overseas crises in order to identify the systemic issues

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[14] Murdock and Flournoy, *Beyond Goldwater-Nichols Phase 2 Report*, 44.

that are problematic to cross-departmental integration and unity of effort. Based on these problem areas, the paper describes desirable characteristics for a new national security system and its organizational structure. It then examines a number of current proposals to reform the national security system's organizations and structure and weighs their relative strengths and weaknesses. From this analysis, the paper recommends an approach that maximizes desirable organizational traits to ensure greater unity of effort in overseas interventions. Finally, the paper describes a number of complementary initiatives including leadership, increased authorizations and capacity, personnel management, and processes and systems required to implement the recommendation. Although the paper acknowledges the need for significant change at the national level including change within Congress, it does not attempt to address in detail the numerous initiatives and legislative action necessary to affect a comprehensive overhaul of the United States Government. As a whole, a reformed national security system with new organizations and structures along with appropriate complementary initiatives will allow the United States to intervene effectively in complex contingencies overseas through an integrated whole of government approach.

"Just as the 1947 National Security Act sought to create a decision-making and policy implementation system for addressing the then novel challenges of the post-World War II world, a national security system for today and tomorrow must be responsive to 21st century security challenges..."[1]

James R. Locher III, Executive Director
Project on National Security Reform

Chapter 2: The Current National Security System—Beyond its Time

The thesis introduced in Chapter 1 concludes that the current United States national security system is inadequate to meet the challenges of today's strategic environment and the price of failure is costly. Specifically, the United States is unable to intervene effectively in complex contingencies or rapidly changing crises that require timely decisions, well-crafted strategies, and an integrated whole-of-government approach. This chapter looks into why the current system fails and identifies systemic problems that hamper effective integration and unified action in overseas contingencies. It reviews the nature of the strategic environment and the demands levied on the national security system. The chapter then provides an overview of the current system, its organizations and characteristics. It identifies points of friction and common failures prevalent in many overseas interventions, and reviews three recent examples to illustrate typical failures—Somalia, Iraq and Afghanistan. Finally, the chapter looks at current approaches to managing complex contingencies and initiatives designed to overcome interagency problems. The chapter closes with a discussion of the consequences of continued failure.

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[1] Locher, *Project on National Security Reform*, ix.

Strategic Demands on an Outdated System

The nature of today's strategic environment differs greatly from the post-World War II era that inspired the current United States national security system. The bi-polar world emblematic of a deliberative, sequential game of chess between two equally matched alliances of nation states is gone. It gave way to a much more diverse and dynamic array of state and non-state actors vying for power and influence in a world inextricably linked by instantaneous global communications, easily accessible transportation for goods, services and people, and interdependent financial and economic systems. The dynamics of this new world are "distinguished not only by their worldwide scope but also by their speed, magnitude, density, and complexity."[2]

At the outset of the Cold War, both sides tended to make decisions based on their analysis of the potential actions of the other side. A highly calculated dance of "action-reaction-counteraction" allowed national security decisions to progress in a methodical and sequential nature. Dangerous for sure, but it was somewhat contained by the deliberative nature and pace of the two world superpowers counterpunching based on strategic posturing. In the United States, highly specialized, compartmentalized departments worked independently within their assigned areas of responsibility to deal with national security issues. This allowed, for example, the Department of State to work the diplomatic angles of a problem until they were no longer required or the president decided to apply another means of national power through another department. This hierarchal system was sufficient for many, though certainly not all, national security related challenges. The pace and nature of emerging crises allowed consultation at the

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[2] Locher, *Project on National Security Reform*, 3.

cabinet level or within the president's inner circle of advisors in a way that generally led to a coordinated policy or strategy decision.

After the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, a new world order, fueled by the information age, replaced the old predictable multi-polar model. In this new order both state and non-state actors initiate and influence world events of significant importance to United States' national security and with greater frequency. "Today, rapid change in many sectors—political and military, economic and financial, energy and environmental, scientific and technological, demographic and social, cultural and intellectual—is a constant feature of the security environment."[3] National security issues tend to rise up simultaneously across multiple fronts requiring rapid decisions involving the knowledge, skills and expertise of many departments and agencies within the federal government. The Clinton administration realized the nature and requirements of the new security environment and determined future overseas interventions were likely to be "complex contingencies." As a result, the administration's Presidential Decision Directive 56 described the new era this way:

> *"In the wake of the Cold War, attention has focused on a rising number of territorial disputes, armed ethnic conflicts, and civil wars that pose threats to regional and international peace and may be accompanied by natural or manmade disasters which precipitate massive human suffering. We have learned that effective responses to these situations may require multi-dimensional operations composed of such components as political/diplomatic, humanitarian, intelligence, economic development, and security: hence the term complex contingency operations."[4]*

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[3] Locher, *Project on National Security Reform*, 3.
[4] Executive Office of the President, Presidential Decision Directive 56 White Paper, "The Clinton Administration's Policy on Managing Complex Contingency Operations," Washington: National Security Council, May 1997.

The United States government no longer has the luxury of time to study individual security issues in isolation or to engage emerging problems sequentially. "While the world is changing, and as its interactions pick up speed thanks to the spreading implications of the information revolution, most of the component parts of the U.S. national security system, still organized hierarchically around traditional organizational disciplines, grow more ponderous and reactive."[5] Gone are the days when the departments and agencies within the government can design and implement national policy as individual courses of action. Effective United States interventions in complex contingencies require all the elements of national power applied in a coordinated and integrated strategy.

Design of the Current National Security System

As the chief executive, the president presides over the national security system and its departments and agencies within the United States government. In this role, he directs national security policy and makes decisions related to national security matters including United States actions in overseas contingencies. The Congress authorizes, appropriates, and conducts oversight activities through its various committees and sub-committees, generally aligned functionally with the departments of the executive branch.

To assist the president with his national security duties, the National Security Act of 1947 established the National Security Council (NSC) and the position of Assistant to the President for National Security. With the exception of the statutory members (the president, vice president, and the Secretaries of Defense, State, and Energy), each

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[5] Locher, *Project on National Security Reform*, ii.

successive presidential administration may organize and staff the NSC as it sees fit.

However, most administrations have maintained a relatively small NSC staff designed to

advise the president in policy matters and to coordinate interagency actions along those

lines. The second Bush Administration stated it this way in its National Security

Presidential Directive 1:

> *"The National Security Act of 1947, as amended, established the National Security Council to advise the President with respect to the integration of domestic, foreign, and military policies relating to national security. That remains its purpose. The NSC shall advise and assist me in integrating all aspects of national security policy as it affects the United States (domestic, foreign, military, intelligence, and economics (in conjunction with the National Economic Council (NEC)). The National Security Council system is a process to coordinate executive departments and agencies in the effective development and implementation of those national security policies."*[6]

The NSC divides into a structure of committees for decision-making and issue

management. The first Bush Administration established the current NSC construct,

which the Clinton and second Bush Administrations continued. The new Obama

Administration, as reflected in its Presidential Policy Directive – 1, also appears ready to

retain the current system with only minor changes.[7] Cabinet secretaries make up the

membership of the highest-level committee, the Principles Committee, while assistant

secretaries make up the Deputies Committee. Working groups called Policy

Coordination Committees or in the new Obama Administration Interagency Policy

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[6] National Security Presidential Directive - 1, *Organization of the National Security Council System* (February 13, 2001).

[7] As of this writing, early into the new administration, it appears the Obama Administration will also continue the current organization of the NSC with substantially three committee levels for decision-making and issue management. Presidential Policy Directive-1 dated February 13, 2009 is the first Obama national security directive that outlines the organization of the NSC system.

Committees, work regional or specific functional issues. By law, the authority and

resources to execute national policy and security related functions reside in the

departments and agencies of the executive branch. The NSC coordinates interagency

efforts, but has neither statutory authority to implement policy nor authority to compel

compliance with established policy. Each department and agency within the executive

branch interprets policy and presidential guidance independently, then executes

accordingly.

A number of problems with this process are increasingly apparent given the new

strategic environment. "First, the system consists of autonomous organizations that, as

all organizations do, put their interests first. This means that roles and missions not

clearly assigned to any particular department or agency receive inadequate attention and

insufficient resources. Second, only the president has the authority to integrate across

these autonomous agencies, but the president has no effective way to delegate his

authority."[8] These organizational and authority problems prevent true integration within

the interagency team, and manifest themselves noticeably at the regional level and often

critically at the mission level of execution. Even under the best conditions where cabinet

level secretaries interpret policy and strategic guidance similarly, no one below the

president has the responsibility and requisite authority to ensure integrated planning and

decision-making. "Two or more departments or agencies may agree to cooperate in

formulating and implementing regional policy, but in the absence of agreement, there

exists no authority short of the president that can force integration."[9]

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[8] Locher, *Project on National Security Reform*, 208.
[9] Ibid., 239.

Characteristics of the National Security Departments and Agencies

Although a number of departments and agencies have national security related functions, the most prevalent are the Department of State, Department of Defense, and the various agencies that comprise the Intelligence Community—Defense is by far the largest in terms of both work force and operating budget. Each national security department and agency independently organizes and executes national security tasks in accordance with its internal culture and traditions, but without overarching guidance for standardization.

The State Department organizes along two levels of effort. It centralizes policy development and decision-making at its headquarters in Washington, D.C. and executes policy at the individual country level from its diplomatic missions. The department has functional and regional interest bureaus led by under secretaries and assistant secretaries who are co-located with the Washington headquarters to support policy formulation and interagency coordination.

At the point of execution, the United States Ambassador is the head of the United States embassy, the president's sole representative to the host nation, and is responsible for policy implementation. In theory and statute, the Ambassador coordinates and integrates the efforts of all United States government activities in the country with the exception of those forces and activities of the Defense Department's regional combatant commander. In practice, "however, representatives from different agencies often pursue

their organizational interests at the expense of a broader, integrated approach, especially when the ambassador tries to lead 'in anything other than a laissez-faire manner'."[10]

In contrast, the Defense department organizes broadly along three levels of effort—strategic, operational, and tactical. From its Pentagon headquarters in Washington, the department provides strategic guidance, planning, and programming through the Office of the Secretary of Defense, the Joint Staff and the Service Departments (Army, Navy and Air Force) to its field commands and agencies. Operationally, the department divides efforts along both regional and functional lines. Geographic combatant commands oversee theater strategic and operational matters within assigned areas of responsibility while functional combatant commands provide enabling capabilities such as transportation, special operations and strategic support. For operational and tactical efforts, the geographic combatant commands may establish joint or combined task forces to execute specific operations related to national security.

The other departments and agencies in the government also tend to look at the world from their own interdepartmental viewpoints, but their representatives operate from the U.S. embassy, ostensibly under the authority of the ambassador. It is not necessary to diagram each department's organizational construct since the two largest organizations are sufficient to illustrate the point. For the most part, the other agencies tend, like the Department of State, to form and guide policy from Washington and implement in the field through small offices located in the embassy.

Overall, the characteristic that captures the essence of the United States current national security system are the divisions along departmental competencies and

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[10] Locher, *Project on National Security Reform*, 40.

authorities with significant weighting toward the military element of national power. The

Project on National Security Reform summarizes this point very well:

> *"First, the Department of Defense has better regional representation than the*
> *Department of State. The Department of State has regional bureaus. The*
> *assistant secretaries who run them have responsibilities to represent the State*
> *Department in the Washington interagency process and to represent State*
> *overseas. The assistant secretaries are forced to make a choice—focus on*
> *Washington and its interagency policy battles or focus on relationships in the*
> *region. Regional combatant commanders find greater time and energy to*
> *focus on regional relationships, since the Department of Defense maintains*
> *representation in interagency regional fora through the Joint Staff and*
> *officials in the Office of the Secretary of Defense. Combatant commanders,*
> *therefore, often emerge as lead individuals (and their commands as lead*
> *agencies) by default in regional policy implementation."*[11]

Points of Friction in the Current System

    To gain a sense of the points of friction within the United States government

when it intervenes in complex contingencies overseas, it is helpful to look at how the

departments and agencies approach matters of national security. Again, it is unnecessary

to diagram all the various departments and agencies. An examination of the differences

between the largest departments is symptomatic of the problems that stretch broadly

across the federal government.

The contrasts between the Departments of State and Defense are stark. Colonel

Rickey L. Rife, a student at the United States Army War College in 1998, captured the

vast cultural differences with an analogy in his essay *Defense is from Mars, State is from*

Venus where he writes:

> *"These two cultures are as alien as life forms from two competing planets, the*
> *warriors from Mars and the diplomats from Venus. Similar in many respects*

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[11] Locher, *Project on National Security Reform*, 240.

professionalism, dedication and competence – Martians and Venutians often have an antagonistic relationship. They are generally polar opposites in character, in approach to problem solving, and in worldview.[12]

The differences manifest themselves in their internal cultures, outcome expectations, mission organization, time horizons, regional views, and methods of planning.

First, as the Rife quotation implies, each department brings its own cultural perspective to the table during national security events. Different objectives and approaches are most noticeable between the military and civilian organizations. The military is a problem solving, objective-oriented body that normally views requirements in the near term with a view to accomplishing the mission then departing. In contrast, civilian organizations like State tend to focus on the long term, building lasting relationships, and addressing the underlying causal factors of problems. "The differing institutional mandates and missions of military and civilian agencies create divergent bureaucratic cultures, which in turn produce perspectives that are particularly difficult to reconcile."[13]

Second, differing expectations and divergent timelines often lead to friction in interagency efforts. The military opts toward concrete, measurable results that are achievable in clearly defined timelines. The civilian agencies are often comfortable with abstract and incremental progress over long periods, that when combined with a broad array of initiatives eventually leads to successful outcomes.

Third, as noted previously, departments and agencies organize differently for their missions with different lines for reporting. Most of the civilian agencies operate at two

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[12] Rickey L. Rife, "Defense is From Mars State is From Venus: Improving Communications and Promoting National Security" (student monograph, United States Army War College, 1998), 3.
[13] Locher, *Project on National Security Reform*, 123.

levels, with strategy development at their Washington headquarters and execution at the

mission level in country. The military organizes into three levels—strategic, operational,

and tactical. This creates an organizational mismatch during overseas contingencies that

hinders integrated strategies, planning, mission execution, and assessment. For example,

there is virtually no counterpart in the civilian departments and agencies similar to the

Defense Department's regional combatant commanders who bridge the strategic and

operational nexus at the regional level. The State Department's regional interest bureaus

align with policy development at the Washington headquarters and the assistant

secretaries heading them "have less practical authority than the U.S. ambassadors to the

individual countries in their regions."[14] Ambassadors report to the appropriate regional

bureau and the Secretary of State or, depending on the personal relationships, directly to

the president. However, a military joint task force commander in the same country

typically reports through the regional combatant commander to the Secretary of Defense

and under some circumstances directly to the president. "Paradoxically, in many cases,

the regional military commanders have more diplomatic influence in a particular country

in their region than the U.S. ambassador there does."[15]

The different organizations and reporting chains further exacerbate effective

interagency coordination and execution during complex contingencies. "Dual civilian

and military chains of command in the field complicate unity of purpose and effort in

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[14] Sunil B. Desai, "Solving the Interagency Puzzle: The Lessons of Jointness," *Policy Review*, no. 129 (February & March 2005): 5 http://www.hoover.org/publications/policyreview/3431461.html (accessed October 1, 2008).
[15] Ibid.

complex contingencies that require close civil-military cooperation. There is almost always confusion over the question of who is in charge."[16]

Fourth, the government lacks a standardized view of the world. Each department views the world independently, and not in ways that align with the other departments. For example, the NSC and State Department view the Western Hemisphere as a single region, but the Defense Department separates the hemisphere into a Northern Command for North America and a Southern Command for Latin and South America. Table 2-1 and Figure 2-1 show the regional templates the major national security departments use to plan for, resource, and approach regional issues. These differences create gaps in coverage, require coordination with multiple counterparts, and inhibit unified action. Standardization to ensure all departments view the world similarly with the same regional outlook would go a long way to remove this source of friction from the current system.

National Security Council (Policy Coordination Committees)	Department of State (Regional Interest Bureaus)	Department of Defense (Geographic Combatant Commands)
Western Hemisphere	Western Hemisphere	Northern Command
		Southern Command
Europe and Eurasia	Europe and Eurasia	European Command
Near East and North Africa	Near East	Central Command
Africa (less North Africa)	Africa	Africa Command
East Asia	East Asia and Pacific	Pacific Command
South Asia	South and Central Asia	

Table 2-1, Regional Alignment of the National Security Departments

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[16] Locher, *Project on National Security Reform*, 243.

Figure 2-1, Superimposed Regional Maps of the Departments of State and Defense

Fifth, the United States Government does not have common standards and processes for planning. Again, each individual department and agency operates on its own according to its traditions and culture. With the exception of the Department of Defense, most government agencies focus on policy development, but very little on deliberate planning to translate policy objectives and goals into action. The planning staffs of most departments and agencies are small, if they exist at all. The extent of planning for many departments consists of articulating a specific national policy for an issue from its Washington-based headquarters, then implementing that policy in the field through the United States country team on the ground.

On the other hand, the Department of Defense maintains a planning culture that transcends all three of its organizational levels from strategic to tactical. "Whereas

military officers are taught to see planning as critical to success in operations and trained in its finer points, this notion is largely foreign to other agencies like the Departments of State and Treasury. With the exception of the Agency for International Development (AID), which plans long-term development projects, the civilian agencies tend not to have dedicated planning staffs or expertise."[17] A common process for interagency planning would greatly benefit multi-departmental activities during overseas contingencies. It would provide a point of reference and common language to translate diverse policy goals and objectives into executable plans for action.

Common Failures in Overseas Interventions

Cultural barriers, the absence of common practices and standards, and dissimilar approaches to national security result in systemic flaws in the United States government's efforts in overseas contingencies. In fact, these flaws are increasingly the norm, not the exception. How is it that the United States, so rich in talent, routinely has such difficulty coordinating its efforts? It certainly is not a lack of quality people or resources. "The system's deficiencies—and the costs these flaws inflict—are not the result of a lack of talent or commitment by national security professionals. These individuals work incredibly hard with unsurpassed dedication. Even so, their contributions are too often vitiated within dysfunctional structures and processes."[18] These problems are symptomatic of the way the government organizes or fails to organize for overseas

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[17] Clark A. Murdock et al., *Beyond Goldwater-Nichols: Defense Reform for a New Strategic Era, Phase 1 Report* (Washington: Center for Strategic and International Studies, March 2004), 61.
[18] Richard Weitz, ed., *Project on National Security Reform: Case Studies Volume I* (Washington: Center for the Study of the Presidency, 2008), i.

contingencies. Understanding the nature of these failures as they relate to unified action is essential to develop and analyze proposals for new organizational structures. Consider the following eight points descriptive of issues present during interagency efforts overseas:

1. The current national security system lacks an integrating authority below the president. The span of control required in today's strategic environment quickly exceeds the ability of the president and the White House to effectively plan, organize and employ all the assets of the federal government. No individual other than the president has authority across the entire government to establish objectives, set priorities, assign tasks and direct resources in an overseas contingency. The current interagency process relies on cooperation and collaboration regardless of the departments and personalities involved. "Taken together, the basic deficiency of the current national security system is that parochial departmental and agency interests, reinforced by Congress, paralyze interagency cooperation even as the variety, speed, and complexity of emerging security issues prevent the White House from effectively controlling the system."[19]

2. The departments and agencies involved in overseas contingencies approach their responsibilities from their core competencies rather than from a coordinated whole-of-government enterprise. The combination of individual department activities often results in duplication of effort, wasted resources and something less than a synergistic sum of the parts. It also leads to ad hoc organizations in the field when the departments and agencies confront requirements that do not fall neatly within their traditional competencies. In addition, to exacerbate the already suboptimal nature of these ad hoc

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[19] Locher, *Project on National Security Reform*, vii.

organizations, the departments and agencies often deploy personnel that are untrained for the particular mission or personnel that lack the requisite level of experience. "It also explains why in novel environments, like 'nation-building' missions in Iraq and Afghanistan, multiple U.S. departments and agencies have trouble cooperating effectively with each other; nothing has prepared them for so doing."[20]

      3. Related to the previous point, resources and funding align with the departments and agencies core competencies, not from a practical perspective to accomplish integrated objectives. There is no single authority given the appropriations and authorizations to resource overseas contingencies in an integrated strategy. "Since we do not budget by mission, no clear link exists between strategy and resources for interagency activities. As things stand, departments and agencies have little incentive to include funding for interagency purposes; they are virtually never rewarded for doing so."[21] The current interagency process does not have a way to link all the tools and resources of the federal government with the nation's goals. As a result, the United States Government's means are often inadequate to achieve its desired ends.

      4. With the exception of the Department of Defense, the other national security agencies are not adequately prepared for expeditionary interventions. Their staffs, trained for traditional core competencies, are unable to generate appropriately sized teams with the necessary cross-disciplinary skills for emerging contingencies on short notice. "Most civilian agencies do not focus on the conduct of operations and therefore lack an operational culture. Consequently, even though these agencies may be tasked with performing critical tasks in a particular operation, they generally lack personnel who are

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[20] Locher, *Project on National Security Reform*, viii.
[21] Ibid.

trained and ready for these missions as well as the authorities and resources to rapidly

deploy them and to quickly establish programs in the field."[22]

The government's struggle to fully field provincial reconstruction teams (PRT) in

both Iraq and Afghanistan with sufficient civilian team members is a good example of

this problem. In testimony before the House Armed Services Committee, Nora Bensahel

a political scientist with the RAND Corporation made the following observation,

"…ongoing efforts in Afghanistan, Iraq, and elsewhere have revealed major capability

shortfalls that can undermine their prospects for success. The single most important

limitation has been a lack of civilian capacity for such operations, which has led to an

overreliance on military forces."[23] Post-war reconstruction efforts in both these countries

required special skills and expertise resident primarily in the civilian departments and

agencies more so than the Department of Defense. Expertise such as public

administration, agriculture, national air and space administration, finance and banking,

public health, and industrial engineering are only present in sufficient quantity in the

private sector and departments other than Defense.   However, in the absence of sufficient

civilian capacity from the interagency team, military forces must assume, as was the case

in Iraq and Afghanistan, a greater burden for reconstruction activities even when they are

less efficient or capable to do so.

5. Also closely related with the previous point, the departments and agencies do

not have sufficient resources and staff to sustain overseas contingencies for extended

periods. After a generally slow start, once the agencies generate trained personnel with

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[22] Murdock, *Beyond Goldwater-Nichols Phase 1 Report*, 62.
[23] Nora Bensahel, House Armed Services Committee, Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations, *Testimony: International Perspectives on Interagency Reform*, January 29, 2008 (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2008), 1.

appropriate skill sets, they are unable to maintain rotational replacements for continuous coverage at the point of mission execution. The bench strength is inadequate. Again, the exception is the Department of Defense; even then, as the simultaneous wars in Iraq and Afghanistan have shown, large-scale long-duration deployments create significant institutional stress within the uniformed services. Yet, "inadequate reserves of soft-power resources have deprived the United States of the ability to employ all requisite elements of national power. The U.S. government's inability to provide enough trained civilian officials, diplomats, and aid workers especially inhibits U.S. capacity to conduct large overseas field operations."[24] The result is the military fills the gap even without the right tools and expertise in order to prevent mission failure leading once again to assertions that United States' foreign engagement is too military centric. It is a self-continuing problem, unable to correct itself given the organization of the current national security system.

6. Even when the departments and agencies attempt to coordinate and collaborate, the lack of common processes and standards hampers progress. There are no common points of reference to assist an interagency cadre bridge cultural and institutional divides. Consistently the result is an ad hoc assortment of cells, bureaus and working groups that establish mutually acceptable methods for planning, monitoring and assessing a specific mission for a specific time and place.

7. Information sharing at all levels of classification is compartmentalized and trapped within separate departmental and agency protocols. Both systems and processes impede information sharing among interagency partners, even in ad hoc team constructs.

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[24] Locher, *Project on National Security Reform*, 128.

Systems are incompatible with each other and unable to bridge without significant time and expense. Standards for classifying information are different in the various departments and agencies, and there continues to be a general reluctance to share information. Instead, departments tend to over classify information and closely guard information within their inner circles. "Moreover, because an excessively hierarchical national security system does not 'know what it knows' as a whole, it also cannot achieve the necessary unity of effort and command to exploit opportunities."[25]

     8. Perhaps the biggest failure and one with long-term consequences is that the United States does not institutionally learn from its overseas interventions. Whether the government gets it right from the start or learns over time through trial and error, the ad hoc nature of the United States' interagency efforts is temporal. The people engaged in the activity learn the lessons they learn at the time they occur. Although captured in after action reports and historical accounts, nothing in the current government interagency process fuses them back into the system to change organizations, processes, education or training permanently. "The lack of institutional learning and knowledge helps explain the slow and limited performance of provincial reconstruction teams in Afghanistan and Iraq. The inability to learn from success or failure is typical of the current system. Thus, what we discovered too late from Vietnam, the energy crisis of the 1970s, Iran, Grenada, Panama, Somalia, Haiti, and 9/11, we are now relearning in Iraq and Afghanistan."[26] Simply put, lessons learned in one presidential administration are lost for subsequent administrations. Too often, the current generation relearns lessons that previous generations discovered, but usually at a great price.

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[25] Locher, *Project on National Security Reform*, vii.
[26] Ibid., 183.

Recent Failures of the Current System

Three recent examples of United States interventions in complex contingencies—Somalia, Iraq, and Afghanistan—illustrate many of the points of friction and common failures present in the current national security system. This section draws heavily from the Iraq Study Group and the case studies generated by the Project on National Security Reform (PNSR). For example, the PNSR examined 106 instances of United States Government involvement in complex contingencies under the current national security system to assess the effectiveness of the interagency system. From its assessment, the PNSR scored 71% of the post Cold War cases studies negative. Furthermore, the cases between 1990 and the present scored significantly lower than those cases prior to 1990.[27] This supports the assertions of some who suggest the current interagency system is failing at an increasing rate due to the complex, dynamic nature of the new strategic environment.

Somalia

The United States intervention in Somalia in 1992-1993 is an example of an intervention that began with adequately resourced objectives and a reasonable expectation of success. However, as national objectives changed, the resources and strategy failed to keep pace. It turned into a political-military disaster with significant loss of American lives and international embarrassment for the United States. "In Somalia, the absence of an integrated strategy for achieving our objectives eventually

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[27] Locher, *Project on National Security Reform*, 110.

yielded the battle of Mogadishu and the untimely withdrawal of the United States and the United Nations from the country."[28]

The first Bush Administration's intervention in Somalia in late 1992 was to assist the United Nations effort to alleviate mass starvation and human suffering. The United States objective was limited—to deliver food aid to prevent starvation then transition the mission to United Nations forces and depart the country.   However, the United Nations desired an expanded mission that included disarming the population and addressing the underlying issues of the failing state.

The United States provided sufficient forces for the initial limited objectives mission and established the Unified Task Force (UNITAF). Despite a less than fully developed strategy from Washington and disagreements between Washington and the United Nations over the scope of the mission, the United States ambassador and military commander on the ground established an effective working relationship between themselves and their staffs. They produced an integrated political-military plan that was ultimately successful and allowed the United States to play a major role in the efforts to avert mass starvation. Then, according to plan, the majority of American forces left Somalia, leaving the operation to the United Nations.

However, United Nations forces (United Nations Operation in Somalia or UNISOM) were slow to replace UNITAF and were quickly overwhelmed in their ability to control the situation, particularly under the expanded objectives of the United Nations mission.   In early 1993, shortly after the change in presidential administrations, the Clinton administration redeployed American forces to Somalia to support the struggling

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[28] Murdock, *Beyond Goldwater-Nichols Phase 1 Report*, 60.

UNISOM mission, but without a clear strategy or objectives. Competing positions among the National Security Council, State Department, and Defense Department led to an incoherent national strategy and unclear objectives for political and military leaders on the ground. The situation allowed a subtle shift in operations in Somalia to occur. Operations in the field became increasingly offensive aimed at eliminating disruptive warlords, but without a clear, common understanding of the true nature of the situation in Washington.

As the situation became more intense in Somalia and UNISOM was unable to effectively deal with the armed warlords, American forces became embroiled in a mission that was under-resourced for the perceived objectives. The mission also lacked a clear political-military plan for reconciliation. The culmination of the military effort occurred in October 1993 after a special operations raid in Mogadishu went horribly wrong. Two United States helicopters were lost to hostile fire and eighteen soldiers killed in action during the subsequent rescue. Following the battle in Mogadishu, the United States scaled back its efforts and eventually departed Somalia in early 1994.

Overall, the later stages of the United States intervention lacked a coherent strategy and clear lines of communication between Washington and interagency elements on the ground. This led to ad hoc decision-making that was ultimately unsuccessful. "As the Clinton Administration took responsibility for the mission, it formally coordinated a strategy that was unclear and which failed to reconcile expansive objectives with limited means. Typical interagency structures and processes were inadequate. They tended to restrict the flow of information and generate compromise rather than clear alternative courses of action. The result was a severe failure with long-term repercussions for U.S.

security interests."[29] Had there been clear lines of authority and an organizational

structure that supported unified action, the United States intervention in Somalia might

have been successful; certainly, it would have been less costly.

Post-conflict Iraq

When the second Bush Administration decided to invade Iraq in 2003 to remove

Saddam Hussein from power, it assigned the Department of Defense as the lead agency

for all aspects of United States activities in Iraq. However, interagency dysfunction and

poor integration manifested themselves from the beginning, from strategy development to

planning the post-war stabilization effort. Although Iraq's conventional military defense

collapsed quickly under a full-scale offensive, the environment following major combat

was anything but easy. A growing insurgency, fueled by a lack of progress to alleviate

the suffering and despair of ordinary Iraqi citizens, complicated the reconstruction effort

that already lacked sufficient resources and a comprehensive plan.

As the lead agency, the Department of Defense lacked sufficient expertise to

address the full scope of post-war reconstruction and stabilization issues for Iraq, yet it

did not have the authority to compel the rest of the interagency team to provide the

requisite civilian expertise. In addition, when planning for the post-war effort, Defense

officials did not anticipate the level of post-conflict civil disorder and were slow to

realize the growing insurgency during execution.[30] Other agencies had planning efforts

underway that could have helped identify the potential problems, but interagency rivalries

and poor coordination prevented real discussions of alternative viewpoints and the

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[29] Weitz, *Case Studies Volume I*, 600.
[30] Locher, *Project on National Security Reform*, 25.

operational considerations that would later prove essential. "The problem, therefore, was not that the U.S. government failed to plan for the postwar period. Instead, it was the failure to effectively coordinate and integrate these various planning efforts."[31]

Although various departments did consider and plan for the aftermath of combat operations, the lack of civilian capacity for reconstruction efforts in the field continued to create problems for the Department of Defense throughout the post-war occupation.[32] Few civilian agencies have practical experience in complex overseas interventions that fall outside of the normal embassy setting. Since the security situation in Iraq was dangerous, the government had significant difficulty assigning qualified and trained personnel in the right grades and in sufficient number to execute the mission.[33] In addition, when the government did assemble an interagency team, organizational and cultural differences impeded effective planning, decision-making and assessment of operations across the entirety of their efforts. Mismatched organizational structures hampered integration of staffs at the right levels. The result was that "…the coordination of assistance programs by the Defense Department, State Department, United States Agency for International Development and other agencies has been ineffective. There are no clear lines establishing who is in charge of reconstruction."[34]

To summarize United States efforts in post-war Iraq, the current national security system, including its organizations and decision-making mechanisms, continues to perform sub-optimally. "Focus, priority setting, and skillful implementation are in short

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[31] Nora Bensahel et al., After Saddam: Prewar Planning and the Occupation of Iraq (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2008), 237.
[32] Ibid., 239.
[33] James A. Baker and Lee H. Hamilton, *The Iraq Study Group Report* (Washington: United States Institute of Peace, 2006) 60.
[34] Ibid., 23.

supply. No single official is assigned responsibility or held accountable for the overall

reconstruction effort."[35] "In planning for and executing operations in Iraq, basic

organizations, organizational cultures, operational procedures, and legislative support

systems, all have been found wanting and require fundamental reform."[36] The fact is that

the national security system and its organizations in both the executive and legislative

branches of the government have yet to adapt to the demands of the new strategic

environment and complex contingencies overseas.[37] Similar to the case study of

Somalia, if the national security system established clear lines of authority and

organizational structures empowered with the ability to integrate and direct interagency

efforts, United States efforts in post-war Iraq would be more effective and less costly.

Afghanistan

If post-war interagency efforts in Iraq are sub-optimal, the efforts in Afghanistan

are even more fragmented and ineffective. Granted, history may well determine that

Afghanistan is the harder problem, but uncoordinated interagency efforts frustrate not

only the American intervention but the efforts of the international community as well.

For example, the Departments of State and Defense each pursued specific objectives in

Afghanistan with little coordination. "Both objectives were reasonable, but the failure to

coordinate them into a single national policy meant that potential members *[of an*

international coalition] received mixed signals, depending on which U.S. official they

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[35] Baker and Hamilton, *Iraq Study Group*, 58.
[36] Weitz, *Case Studies Volume I*, 57.
[37] Ibid.

were talking to. This lack of unity led to diplomatic frustration and resentment and to allied reluctance to participate in stabilization efforts after the fall of the Taliban."[38]

In fact, without a coherent strategy, a coordinated effort, and greater resources from across the whole of government, the cause in Afghanistan may fail. "In Afghanistan, the failure to provide adequate international military and police forces to create a secure and stable environment and adequate civilian capabilities to jumpstart reconstruction has put the country's political transition at risk."[39] As the Obama Administration focuses on the difficult tasks of reconstruction and stabilization in Afghanistan, efforts to apply all the government's resources in a comprehensive strategy will continue haphazardly without significant reform to the national security system in ways that create clear lines of authority over the interagency team.

Summary of Recent Failures

All three overseas intervention examples show recurring problems including incoherent strategies, failure to integrate diverse interagency efforts, unclear lines of authority for decision-making and under resourced interagency assets to accomplish desired objectives. In short, not only did the interventions lack unity of command, they also lacked unity of effort. These problems led to ad hoc organizational constructs in the field that increasingly proved less than effective and often produce long-term negative consequences. However, the right organizational structures do not exist in the current national security system to ensure coherent strategies and unity of effort.

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[38] Nora Bensahel and Anne M. Moisan, "Repairing the Interagency Process," *Joint Force Quarterly*, no. 44 (1st Quarter 2007): 106.
[39] Murdock, *Beyond Goldwater-Nichols Phase 1 Report*, 60.

In Somalia, failure to integrate interagency efforts under a single authority with a clear strategy resulted in significant blow to American credibility and influence. "The strategy *[in Somalia]* required the integration of multiple elements of power since no one element could manage the crisis alone, but the elements of national power were not well integrated, either in crafting or implementing policy and strategy."[40]   Essentially the same problems on a larger scale occurred in Afghanistan and Iraq. "In both Afghanistan and Iraq, the early policy to reduce support for nation-building ad-hoc efforts gave way to efforts to do just that—and the following years were marked by long-term post-conflict stabilization and reconstruction efforts."[41]   The examples show that, in the absence of clear lines of authority, ad hoc organizations will emerge that despite the best efforts of those involved will likely produce sub-optimal results.

The major consequences of failure in overseas contingencies are usually obvious: high casualties, great financial expenditure to no avail, and loss of American influence and prestige. However, there are other less clear repercussions. "When the United States performs poorly in smaller conflicts where less than vital interests are at stake, it nevertheless pays a price for failure, inviting miscalculations on the part of its enemies and higher overall costs for ensuring its security. Since the failure in Somalia had significant repercussions for the nation, understanding what went wrong and how to prevent it is valuable. Unfortunately, it is not clear that we have learned much from the failure in Somalia."[42]   Without significant changes to the national security system and its organizations, the United States will continue to repeat the failures of Somalia, Iraq and

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[40] Weitz, *Case Studies Volume I*, 375.
[41] Locher, *Project on National Security Reform*, 25.
[42] Weitz, *Case Studies Volume I*, 382-383.

Afghanistan in future complex contingencies with great and lasting consequences. Therefore, it is prudent to take a deeper look into how the current system manages complex contingencies to understand what does and does not work.

Managing Complex Contingencies in the Current System

The current national security system generates four different methods to manage complex contingencies: White House lead; the lead agency approach; the lead "czar" approach; and the field level ad hoc approach. Each of these approaches has significant limitations and rarely confronts the problems associated with interagency efforts in complex contingencies.

The White House lead approach centralizes issue management from policy formulation to decision-making within the Executive Office of the President. With his inner circle of advisors, key cabinet level secretaries, and the NSC staff, the president reviews response options for contingencies and directs actions for the various departments and agencies to execute. While this was sufficient in the past for relatively simple, straightforward crises, it is virtually impossible when crises become complex and occur near simultaneously. "White House centralization of interagency missions also risks creating an untenable span of control over policy implementation. By one count more than 29 agencies or special groups report directly to the president."[43] In addition, an unintended consequence of White House lead is that it distracts the NSC staff from its full time responsibilities of strategy advice and policy formulation. The NSC cannot effectively perform real-time crisis and issue management while it maintains routine

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[43] Locher, *Project on National Security Reform*, viii.

tasks. The 9/11 Commission in its assessment of the current national security system discovered that the White House staff is already 50 percent larger than it was prior to the 9/11 terrorist attacks, but even with the larger staff, NSC daily requirements consume its staff even before adding additional responsibilities.[44] The span of control is too great to centralize mission management and decision authority in such a small staff. It is not an effective method to manage complex contingencies overseas.

The lead agency approach is often the method of choice, but it rarely works well. This approach is a policy decision by the president to invest power and lead responsibility in one of the national security departments or agencies to coordinate the United States' response during a contingency. However, interagency rivalries often thwart this approach since no individual or department beside the president has the authority to compel cooperation from all the departments in the government. In addition, since Congress authorizes funding and resource appropriations for specific departments and agencies, only the president can direct resourcing priorities and employment. This makes coordination and integration of the interagency almost impossible under the current system. "Leaving this integration function to a lead agency, which has no authority over its counterparts and cannot bring the President's authority to bear, has been tried in the past but rarely works, as was most recently demonstrated when President Bush gave the lead to DoD for planning for post-conflict operations in Iraq."[45]

The lead "czar" approach during crisis management usually fails for the exact same reasons the lead agency approach fails. In this case, the president's policy decision

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[44] Thomas H. Kean and Lee H. Hamilton, *The 9/11 Commission Report* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 2004), 402.
[45] Murdock, *Beyond Goldwater-Nichols Phase 1 Report*, 61-62.

is to vest power in a single individual to lead and coordinate the government's response.

Yet, "czars must rely on their proximity to the president and their powers of persuasion, which, if institutional stakes are high, can be downplayed if not entirely dismissed. The illusion that lead agency or lead individual fixes will work in turn tends to demobilize continuing efforts at creative thinking among senior officials, thus enlarging the prospect of ultimate mission failure."[46] In the end, the result of the lead czar approach is often the same as the lead agency approach, a less than fully integrated interagency effort.

In the absence of a designated lead agency or individual, the interagency process often operates in ad hoc arrangements in the field, organized by well-intentioned leaders who know they must collaborate and coordinate their actions. However, as recent examples in Somalia, Iraq, and Afghanistan show, even great leaders with the best intentions rarely overcome the significant obstacles of inter-departmental rivalries, divergent organizational cultures, and lack of integrating authority.

The United States Government must transform the national security system in a way that creates integrated interagency organizations under a unifying authority to ensure unified action. Although there may be reason to shift authorities during various phases of an intervention, unity of command is essential at all times to ensure effective interagency action in complex contingencies.

Consequences of Continued Failure

As the case studies and other recent interventions show, the United States' performance in complex overseas contingencies is not improving. Such interventions will require higher costs in the future that the American people may be unwilling or

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[46] Locher, *Project on National Security Reform*, viii.

unable to pay. However, "as presently configured, the national security institutions of the

U.S. government are still the institutions constructed to win the Cold War. Instead of

facing a few very dangerous adversaries, the United States confronts a number of less

visible challenges that surpass the boundaries of traditional nation-states and call for

quick, imaginative, and agile responses."[47]

The government must change the current national security system and its

organizations to better adapt to the new strategic environment. "No mere tinkering can

transform a national security organization designed, tested, and tempered to deal with a

focused state-centric military threat into one that can deal with highly differentiated

threats whose sources may be below and above as well as at the level of the state system.

The gap between the challenges we face and our capacity to deal with them is thus

widening from both ends."[48] A dramatic overhaul of the national security system is

required to produce empowered organizations with the ability and authority to integrate

all the resources of the interagency team in a comprehensive unifying manner. "The

current national security system cannot provide this. Instead, departments and agencies

are often working against one another, the White House is unable to make timely and

well-informed decisions, and there is an overreliance on military force."[49]   Without a

significant change in the way the United States intervenes in complex contingencies

overseas, the costs in American lives, influence and security are likely to be high.

The ineffective organizational design of the current national security system,

particularly at the operational and field level, is a glaring common denominator in many

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[47] Kean and Hamilton, *9/11 Commission Report*, 399.
[48] Locher, *Project on National Security Reform*, ii.
[49] Weitz, *Case Studies Volume I*, i.

of the failures shown throughout this chapter. Based on the points of friction and failures

identified in this chapter, the next chapter examines desirable attributes for an

organizational structure designed for unified action in complex overseas contingencies.

"Americans should not settle for incremental, ad hoc adjustments to a system designed generations ago for a world that no longer exists… The United States has the resources and the people. The government should combine them more effectively, achieving unity of effort."[1]

The 9/11 Commission Report

Chapter 3: Organizational Attributes for Effective Unified Action

Previous chapters revealed that American overseas interventions routinely lack unity of effort and often result in *personality-driven ad hoc organizations*[2] where no clear authority exists to integrate the interagency team. To reverse this trend, the United States needs to reevaluate how it organizes for complex contingencies. The key is to identify the right set of organizational attributes necessary to overcome the interagency problems and points of friction highlighted in Chapter 2 that hinder unified effort in the field.

This chapter identifies seven desirable organizational characteristics necessary for effective interagency action with emphasis on the operational and mission levels. The chapter discusses each characteristic in terms of three or four defining traits. The following chapter then uses these traits or attributes to analyze current proposals to reform the national security system and its organizations to determine the most promising options.

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[1] Kean and Hamilton, *9/11 Commission Report*, 399.
[2] Murdock and Flournoy, *Beyond Goldwater-Nichols Phase 2 Report*, 44.

1. The Integrating Mechanism

An effective organizational structure requires integrating mechanisms at each of the key levels of execution. The integrating mechanism characteristic has four critical traits.

First, a single entity or individual ***empowered with decision-making authority*** to compel action from all federal departments and agencies during planning, execution and mission assessment.

Second, this governing entity or individual must have ***directive authority*** to establish objectives, set priorities, task agencies and employ interagency resources assigned at his specific organizational level without contingent requirements to vet or gain approval from the next higher level of authority or from the headquarters of the individual departments and agencies. The key points of this second trait are the authority to task departments and agencies, and the authority to direct the resources of those departments and agencies. This individual authority "would articulate the United States' overarching objectives in a given mission area, identify critical tasks that need to be undertaken, lay out an overall approach to how these tasks would be performed, and assign responsibility for specific areas to specific agencies."[3]

The third trait of the integrating authority is that he also ***creates and implements strategic communications*** appropriate for his organizational level in accordance with United States policy and strategic objectives.

The result of the first three traits leads to the fourth trait whereby the integrating mechanism becomes the ***central contact for host nation governments, international and***

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[3] Murdock and Flournoy, *Beyond Goldwater-Nichols Phase 2 Report*, 45.

coalition partners, and non-governmental organizations for all United States' activities

involved in the intervention.

2. Regional Competence

To develop a high degree of regional expertise and in-depth knowledge, it is

necessary to maintain a level of regional expertise that allows a full-time focus on the

specific issues in each of the geographical regions where United States interests are

involved. This characteristic has four essential traits.

First, in order to develop an in-depth knowledge of regional issues, an

organizational structure must ensure *continuous engagement* by its subject matter

experts in the region in which they specialize. These organizations would conduct

continuous engagement to influence and shape their regions in ways that reflect United

States policy and national security interests.

Second, based on the in-depth knowledge gained through engagement activities,

the organization must *develop and maintain deliberate plans* for development activities

and contingencies for potential crises. This includes not only a deliberate cycle of

planning to avert emerging regional conflicts, but also, maintenance of ready-to-go

concepts for decisive action when necessary. For unforeseen scenarios, the regional

organizations require robust capabilities to conduct crisis action planning and to develop

policy advice for national level authorities during contingencies.

To advance United States regional interests and enhance the potential for positive

outcomes during contingencies, the third trait is an organizational structure that *builds*

and fosters long-term relationships within each region. These organizations would also

conduct continuous engagements throughout their respective regions to build and foster

long-term relationships with key governmental and non-governmental leaders at both the

national and regional level.

The requirements of the first three traits suggest a fourth enabling trait that

requires an organizational structure that ***maintains a degree of permanent forward***

presence in the region to facilitate necessary engagement activities. Although locating

regionally focused organizations within the continental United States is feasible, a truly

effective organization would maintain at least a forward presence within the region in

which it operates. Certainly, some separation from Washington, D.C. is desirable to

prevent the regional organizations from being absorbed over time into the policy making

body at large.

Additionally, the government must standardize the way it divides the geographic

regions of the world among the various agencies of government, then create distinct

organizations that manage operations and conserve institutional expertise for their

specific regions. As shown in Chapter 2, the national security departments and agencies

view the regions of the world independently and they do not align with each other.

"Aligning these various regional structures into a single structure would foster unity of

effort, enable far better planning and conduct of policy and operations in each region, and

ensure that all advice to the president comes from the same frame of reference."[4]

Finally, new organizations specifically designed to integrate the federal

government at the regional and field level are preferable over piecemeal additions to

existing organizations like the State Department's regional interest bureaus or the

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[4] Desai, *Solving the Interagency Puzzle*, 5.

Defense Department's regional commands. Although there are innovations with varying

degrees of success like the Joint Interagency Coordination Groups in the combatant

commands, these efforts in the grand scheme are piecemeal approaches that do not solve

the underlying integration and authority issues outlined previously in Chapter 2.[5]

3. Responsive to Regional Contingencies

The third characteristic is that the organizational structure must be capable of

rapid response to emerging and dynamic sources of conflict. "Creating such a standing

capacity is critical to reducing the response time to crises and to enabling the

development of standard operating procedures, the training of personnel, and the forging

of interagency relationships that will be put to the test in real-world operations."[6] This

characteristic has four key traits.

First, the organizational construct requires a ***standing body of multi-disciplinary***

experts. Any American intervention must be credible in that it provides expert, multi-

disciplinary capabilities inherent across the entire federal government with specific

expertise in the region. Leaders and staff of these organizations would already be

familiar with the region's contingency plans and the long-term development projects;

training exercises would account for crisis management in potential contingencies.

The second trait is an important derivative of the first trait in that the organization

is ***postured for rapid response to regional crises***. This requirement suggests a standing

organization with permanent forward presence, but if resourced with adequate strategic

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[5] Murdock and Flournoy, *Beyond Goldwater-Nichols Phase 2 Report*, 45.
[6] Ibid., 52.

lift capabilities it could locate outside the focus region. However, the desirable condition is to locate within the region.

The third trait also suggests an organizational posture, one that in addition to rapid response allows an ***incremental and scalable response*** to avert crises and skillfully manage issues during crises. This trait also requires the ability to expand initial efforts with staffing and resources appropriate for the crisis.

The fourth trait is one that allows ***independent crisis management*** without significant additional augmentation. In other words, the organization is already equipped with all the expertise and resources to handle a majority of potential crises without tapping the rest of the government to source the contingency.

4. Sustainable Response to Regional Contingencies

Permanent organizational structures must be of sufficient size to sustain long-duration interventions through periodic personnel rotations. This characteristic of sustainable response has three essential traits.

First, the organizational construct should have robust capabilities that enables it to maintain oversight of United States activities throughout the region and ***manage multiple, simultaneous interventions*** that may or may not be directly related.   Certainly, the size of these organizations would be comparable to the staffs of the Defense Department's combatant commands, if not larger. The staff composition requires representation from all departments and agencies with national security related responsibilities, and must be of sufficient size to create specialized teams or interagency task forces for local execution while the core staff continues to function. Staff

organization can be functional along the lines of the elements of national power or organized along another construct so long as it ensures the integration of multi-disciplinary expertise.

The second trait is that the organizational structure must be sufficient to allow for *multiple personnel rotations* of qualified, trained experts internal to the standing organization. In the long term, it is counterproductive to rotate personnel who are not regional experts, are unqualified or are not of the appropriate grade level.

The third and a critically important trait is that the reorganized national security structure must ensure that it *reduces the president's span of control* to a manageable level. The optimal system would ensure the president receives complete, integrated reporting during multiple contingencies from the fewest number of senior officials possible to ensure success. Empowered officials with presidential and statutory authority for cross-departmental issue management during complex contingencies are necessary to reduce the president's current burden as the single integrating authority in the government.

5. Ensures Institutional Memory/Learning

A new organizational structure must be capable of institutional memory and learning. As the previous chapters indicated, American interventions overseas often reduce to ad hoc organizations driven by personalities that improve performance over time due to the experiences and learning of the direct participants. Even over a multi-year period, those same individuals tend to have multiple deployments and the interagency process appears to improve systematically. This is an illusion and temporal.

Once the major intervention is over and the passage of time results in a new generation of leaders and staff, history shows that the United States often relearns the lessons of old. "A critical factor governing an intervention's chances of success, both in combat situations where the integration or coordination of military and nonmilitary instruments of power and influence is engaged…, is conservation of experience."[7] This characteristic of institutional memory has four essential traits.

First, to guard against unnecessary costs in lives and resources, national security organizations must have the ability to *adapt to changes in the strategic environment*. This is particularly important during crises and before emerging problems become critical. As an intervention unfolds, adaptable organizations anticipate change and posture to avert or manage emerging challenges.

The second trait is to *capture lessons learned and best practices*. "A high premium should be put on lessons learned and best practices, which need to be rigorously developed, validated, and assiduously passed on. This needs to be done especially at the theater and field levels, including indoctrination of incoming units and senior personnel."[8] Again, the ability to capture lessons learned during interventions allows organizations to adapt and change along with the dynamic environs characteristic of complex contingencies.

The third trait is to *integrate lessons learned into organizational change*. Organizations must capture historical accounts, best practices and lessons learned then formally integrate them in ways that improve people, processes and systems.

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[7] Hunter, Gnehm and Joulwan, *Integrating Instruments of Power*, 32.
[8] Ibid.

The fourth trait is to ***integrate lessons learned into staff and leader training***. Exercises that integrate best practices into leader and staff development are key components to institutional learning. This trait suggests permanent, standing organizations vice the status quo. Lead agency or ad hoc approaches do not adequately meet the test for institutional memory since by their nature they are only temporary.

6. Retains Core Departmental Competencies

Any reorganization of the national security system must facilitate the development of a common interagency culture while protecting the core competencies that each federal department and agency brings to the interagency process. This characteristic has three key traits and one critical trait.

First, new organizations at the operational and field level should ***develop common processes and systems*** that create an overarching interagency culture. Common processes and systems do not exist now and, as shown in Chapter 2, the lack of commonality tends to exacerbate already existing points of friction when departments and agencies attempt to collaborate in the field.

The second trait for this characteristic is that it must ***preserve core departmental competencies*** and integrate the various disciplines and capabilities without diminishing the departments and agencies. An interagency culture that focuses on the entirety of complex contingencies must protect departmental expertise during planning, execution and assessment.

The third trait is that the experiences of interagency efforts and lessons learned in overseas contingencies must return to the departments in *feedback loops to refine and develop new departmental capabilities*.

The motivation to retain core capabilities is analogous to the successful results of the 1986 Defense of Department Reorganization Act (Goldwater-Nichols) that created "jointness" in the Department of Defense. This act forced the separate uniformed services to integrate their activities in a way that created a culture of joint operations instead of simultaneous independent actions by each service. Mandatory assignments of personnel to joint service billets developed cross-service competencies and, over time, reinforced a culture of jointness. Joint operations are now the standard practice for the United States armed services—the operations that led to stunning victories in Operation Desert Storm and rapid combat victories in Afghanistan and Iraq. "A strong interagency culture would provide the fundamental basis for the parts of the interagency community to work together as a cohesive whole without merging or marginalizing individual agencies."[9] However, the lack of an interagency culture impedes United States efforts to win the peace after major combat operations.

The final, critical trait of this characteristic is to *maintain the direct military chain of command* between the president and combat forces. It is essential to ensure that national defense organizations are able to act rapidly and decisively during emergencies that threaten national survival or vital interests. The president must retain freedom of action to protect American citizens *in extremis* cases. A reorganization of the national

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[9] Desai, *Solving the Interagency Puzzle*, 1-9.

security system must retain simple, direct chains-of-command between the president and the nation's military forces.

7. Accountable to National Authority

Finally, new organizational structures in the national security system must be accountable to the American people through national authorities. This characteristic has four traits.

First, the executive branch of the United States Government executes activities in overseas contingencies and, as such, the individuals in positions of authority need a streamlined **reporting chain to the president** without unnecessary bureaucratic layers. However, Congressional oversight is an essential role in the American system of checks and balances.

Certainly, leaders subordinate to the president who retain significant and permanent authority over the whole of government activities at the regional level should bear scrutiny through the confirmation process. Therefore, the second trait is **Senate confirmation** of the individuals with authority over new organizations in the national security system.

The third trait is that new organizations with national security missions receive **resources through Congressional appropriations**. These organizations would receive funding and resources through the individual departments and agencies, but also through specific regional mission appropriations and authorizations. The intent of this paper is not to address the specifics of the legislative process to support this last point; however, a subsequent chapter will cover it briefly.

Finally, to ensure appropriate checks and balances, the fourth trait ensures any new organizations, particularly at the regional level, should ***periodically report to the Congress*** through testimony and formal written reports.

Criteria for Examining Organizational Structures

"Improving U.S. performance in complex contingency operations requires creating a robust and interconnected set of integration mechanisms at the strategic, operational, and tactical levels of the U.S. government."[10] The seven characteristics described in this chapter address many of the critical problems and points of friction increasingly present in overseas interventions that require an integrated whole of government approach. These characteristics then are reasonable criterion to evaluate the numerous proposals for reorganizing the government for complex contingencies. Table 3-1 captures the seven evaluation criteria and their descriptive traits. The next chapter will examine the various reorganization proposals through the lens of these criteria. "Given the high likelihood of U.S. involvement in complex contingency operations for the foreseeable future, achieving greater jointness and success in interagency operations must be one of our highest national security priorities."[11] Getting the right organizations in place with the right characteristics is essential to ensuring success in the future.

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[10] Murdock and Flournoy, *Beyond Goldwater-Nichols Phase 2 Report*, 54.
[11] Ibid.

Desirable Characteristic (Evaluation Criteria)	Trait 1	Trait 2	Trait 3	Trait 4
Integrating Mechanism	Single decision-making authority	Directive Authority for tasks/resources	Point for Strategic Communications	Central Contact for International Partners
Regional Competence	Continuous Engagement	Deliberate Plans for Development and Contingencies	Builds and Fosters Long-term Relationships	Maintains a Forward Regional Presence
Responsive to Contingencies	Standing regional organization of multi-disciplinary experts	Rapid response to regional crises	Incremental and scalable response capability; expandable	Able to conduct independent crisis management
Sustainable Response	Sufficient size to conduct multiple personnel rotations	Sufficient size to manage multiple, simultaneous interventions	Reduces president's span of control to manageable level	N/A
Institutional Memory/Learning	Adaptable to change with dynamic crisis	Captures lessons learned and best practices	Integrates lessons learned into organizational change	Integrates lessons learned into organizational and leader training
Retains Core Departmental Competencies	Develops common culture and processes for interagency	Integrates and preserves core departmental competencies	Provides feedback loops for core departmental development	Maintains direct military chain-of-command with president
Accountable to National Authority	Single authority reports to the president	Senate confirmation of single authority	Resourced through Congressional appropriations	Periodic reports to Congress

Table 3-1, Desirable Organizational Characteristics and Traits

"The outdated bureaucratic superstructure of the 20th century is an inadequate basis for protecting the nation from 21st century security challenges…, and the system itself, or alternatively, some of its key components, requires revision."[1]

Congressional Research Service

Chapter 4: The Proposals for Organizational and Structural Reform

There are numerous proposals suggesting how to transform the national security system and its organizations to make it more effective in complex contingencies. Scholars, think tanks inside and outside of government, and practitioners have all engaged in this debate and offered thoughts on the subject. Some ideas draw their origins from first-hand experience, others from in-depth, multi-year studies. Regardless, many of these concepts are thoughtful and worthy of comparative analysis. This chapter examines the major proposals to reorganize the national security structure and its organizations using the criteria outlined in the previous chapter.

Although there are many structural proposals and sub-variations of each, they generally divide into three primary categories: Washington-based approaches, regional-based approaches, and echeloned team approaches. As a construct, this chapter looks at the major proposals and variations within each category and provides a description and an assessment of each. The assessment uses the seven desirable organizational characteristics and associated traits established in the previous chapter and shown in Table 3-1 as criterion for analysis. A simple measure using a plus, minus, or zero (+, -, 0) indicates whether each character trait is, is not, or is neutrally represented in the proposal. For comparative purposes, those options that show a relatively high correlation

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[1] CRS, *Overview of the Interagency Reform Debates*, 1.

with the desirable characteristics are more likely to be effective in complex

contingencies. Based on this assessment, the next chapter then provides a recommended

organizational structure either from an already proffered solution or a derivative from

components of multiple concepts.

Washington-based Approaches

There are five major Washington-based organizational approaches to assess. The

common aspect of these approaches is a heavy reliance on the National Security Council

or a similar agency at the national level to act as the primary integrating and oversight

mechanism for complex contingencies.

1. Department of State Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization

The Department of State Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization

(S/CRS) is a current initiative created in 2004 by the second Bush Administration to

assign responsibility to a single executive agency charged with coordinating all aspects of

the United States Government civilian response to reconstruction and stabilization (R&S)

efforts. The administration followed in December 2005 with an executive order, National

Security Presidential Directive - 44 (NSPD-44), designating the Secretary of State as the

lead agency to "coordinate and lead integrated United States Government efforts,

involving all U.S. Departments and Agencies with relevant capabilities, to prepare, plan

for, and conduct stabilization and reconstruction activities." [2] In his January 2007 State

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[2] National Security Presidential Directive - 44, *Management of Interagency Efforts Concerning Reconstruction and Stabilization* (December 7, 2005), 2.

of the Union Address, President Bush expanded his vision for the S/CRS by requesting

Congress authorize and fund a Civilian Response Corps to support R&S contingencies

overseas. In June 2008, Congress appropriated $75 million for the S/CRS and the

development of a Civilian Response Corps.[3]

The Civilian Stabilization Initiative (CSI) creates a corps of civilians for use by

the S/CRS in R&S contingencies. The CSI envisions a 250-person Active Response

Corps with a 2000-person Standby Response Corps ready to deploy later in support of the

initial response. Current government employees fill both the Active and Standby Corps.

A third echelon, a 2000-person Civilian Reserve Corps, is to be filled with multi-

disciplinary experts in the private sector willing to be called to duty for overseas R&S

contingencies.[4] The Interagency Management System is the term that describes the

conceptual plan to manage all three elements of the CSI to support R&S efforts.

The S/CRS mandate is to coordinate, "harmonize" and integrate civilian R&S

efforts with military operations, planned or on going, to create a whole of government

approach to contingencies. The Department of State is the designated lead agency, but all

other departments and agencies continue to develop their own budgets and plans for

supporting the S/CRS. It is important to note that the S/CRS charter is only to coordinate

interagency efforts in R&S missions and nothing else. For example, S/CRS does not

have a role in other types of contingencies such as disaster relief or humanitarian

assistance. NSPD-44 assigns twelve coordination and integration tasks to the S/CRS

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[3] U.S. Congressional Research Service Report for Congress, *Peacekeeping/Stabilization and Conflict Transitions: Background and Congressional Action on the Civilian Response/Reserve Corps and other Civilian Stabilization and Reconstruction Capabilities*, Nina Serafino and Martin Weiss (Washington: Government Printing Office, September 18, 2008), 14.
[4] Ibid.

including the development of contingency plans, risk assessments and preventative

strategies for foreign states or regions at risk. The S/CRS also resolves policy,

programming and funding disputes within the executive branch. Policy Coordination

Committees within the NSC are the envisioned vehicle for the S/CRS to conduct its

coordination activities at the national level.[5]

For R&S contingencies, the S/CRS would utilize the Interagency Management

System to generate multi-disciplinary interagency teams from within the Civilian

Response Corps to deploy to the field. Those in the Active Corps would immediately

form an Interagency Planning Cell (IPC) to co-locate with the appropriate geographic

combatant commander that is planning for or conducting military operations. The S/CRS

would begin its planning in conjunction with the combatant commander through the

coordination and liaison of the IPC. The S/CRS would also forward deploy an Advance

Civilian Team (ACT) to the affected country team to coordinate with the ambassador and

his staff to begin in-country planning. Then, if the combatant commander forms a Joint

Task Force (JTF) to command military operations in the field, the S/CRS would form a

Field Advance Civilian Team (FACT) to forward deploy and co-locate with the JTF. The

FACT plans and coordinates with the military to integrate civilian aspects of interagency

R&S efforts.

Although created several years ago, the S/CRS is still in its infancy and does not

have a leadership role in current R&S efforts in Iraq or Afghanistan. The Bush

Administration opted to continue R&S efforts in these countries under the dual leadership

of the military-embassy constructs in place. As of this writing, the Obama

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[5] NSPD-44, 2-5.

Administration has not indicated a desire to change this approach. Beginning late in

2006, the S/CRS did deploy small numbers to Darfur, Lebanon, Chad, Iraq and Kosovo,

but these efforts appear token rather than substantive. It is unclear today, how the new

Obama Administration will employ the S/CRS in future contingencies or if it will even

continue the concept. However, if the new administration adopts this initiative, the

S/CRS concept and structure requires additional maturation. Congressional funding and

authorizations as well as personnel recruitment remain priority issues. Congress would

have to make permanent the S/CRS authorization by amending the State Department

Basic Authorities Act of 1956 and codify its exact responsibilities vis-à-vis other

agencies and departments. Congress would also have to fund S/CRS staffing and

operations budgets fully. Yet, given adequate funding levels, finding and recruiting

sufficient civilian expertise to source the Civilian Response Corps remains a challenge.

They are "scarce, decentralized in organization, and difficult to call up." Skeptics are

not convinced the government could find enough experts in sufficient quantities to

replace military R&S efforts effectively.[6]

For assessment purposes, assume S/CRS authorizations and funding are complete,

and the Civilian Response Corps is at full strength. The S/CRS concept correlates

strongly with the desired trait of retaining core departmental competencies and positively

with the traits of responsiveness, sustainability and accountability. However, the S/CRS

correlates strongly negative for the integrating mechanism and regional expertise traits.

Overall, the S/CRS does little to change the status quo used by many administrations to

assign a lead agency to manage complex contingencies. The difference is that this lead

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[6] CRS, *Peacekeeping/Stabilization and Conflict Transitions,* 18-22.

agency has an assigned mission in advance with time to prepare before crises erupt. Because the S/CRS mandate is to coordinate interagency efforts, the existing departments and agencies retain their core missions and responsibilities for execution, and the permanence of the S/CRS allows continuous feedback to the departments to improve future performance. These are positive traits.

The construct of the Civilian Response Corps allows for an immediate response to contingencies and for a scalable and sustainable rotation, which are also positive traits. However, even though the Congress maintains visibility over funding and S/CRS activities through the budgeting and hearing process for the Department of State, the president must manage contingencies through the reporting of multiple agencies. Since the departments and agencies retain separate responsibilities for execution in the field, multiple agencies and decision-makers direct tasks and resources at the point of execution. There is no single authority in charge, therefore, no real change to the status quo. Lines of authority remain unclear and no single point of integration exists to direct critical resources to established priorities. Finally, since the S/CRS is a Washington-based organization that responds on an as required basis, it does not maintain standing presence around the world to develop regional expertise and foster relationships that are essential to advancing United States interests abroad. These traits correspond strongly to the negative.

Desirable Characteristic	Trait 1	Trait 2	Trait 3	Trait 4	Overall Score
Integrating Mechanism	0	-	-	-	- - -
Regional Competence	-	0	-	-	- - -
Responsive to Contingencies	-	+	+	0	+
Sustainable Response	+	0	0	n/a	+
Institutional Memory/Learning	0	0	0	0	0
Retains Departmental Competencies	+	+	+	+	++++
Accountable to National Authority	-	0	+	+	+

Table 4-1, Assessment of the State/Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization

2. Prevention, Reconstruction, and Stabilization Cell within the NSC

Nora Bensahel and Anne Moisan argue that the National Security Council is the only government entity capable of overcoming bureaucratic friction and departmental culture clashes with directive authority that is enforceable. They propose to create within the existing NSC structure a Prevention, Reconstruction, and Stabilization Cell (PRSC) to integrate interagency efforts in complex contingencies requiring a whole of government approach. The small PRSC staff with 10-15 members would consist of permanent NSC employees rather than a mix of officers detailed from various departments and agencies. The PRSC would develop policy, conduct strategic planning, and have directive authority over all departments and agencies involved in contingencies. Designated departments and agencies would have lead for execution of policy and directives in the field.[7]

The proposal envisions three functional divisions within the PRSC. A strategic planning division reviews intelligence, plans for possible contingencies and captures lessons learned to adapt doctrine and organizations for future operations. A crisis

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[7] Bensahel and Moisan, "Repairing the Interagency Process," 107-108.

management division aims to prevent future crises and oversees interagency activities during crisis. The coalition-building division develops new capabilities and builds relationships with potential partners for future contingencies. The concept calls for small staffs of three to four officers per division. Officers would serve a minimum of five-year tours in the PRSC before transferring to other assignments in order to develop specialized expertise in interagency operations and processes.

Figure 4-1, Prevention, Reconstruction, and Stabilization Cell (PRSC)[8]

An assessment of the PRSC reveals little improvement over the existing NSC structure. While it does dedicate a small core staff to focus specifically on R&S efforts, it does not create an integrating authority in the field nor a permanent depth of regional expertise that is responsive and sustainable in rapidly developing crises overseas. Due to

[8] Bensahel and Moisan, "Repairing the Interagency Process," 106.

its small size, the PRSC is adaptable and may quickly turn lessons learned into doctrinal

and organizational changes.   Since it only integrates current departmental capabilities,

the various departments and agencies will retain their core competencies and the military

chain of command with the president remains uninterrupted. However, given its direct

access to the president and NSC position within the Executive Office of the President,

PRSC activities are not largely visible to the Congress for oversight. In addition, there is

no substantial reduction in the president's span of control.

Desirable Characteristic	Trait 1	Trait 2	Trait 3	Trait 4	Overall Score
Integrating Mechanism	0	0	-	-	- -
Regional Competence	-	0	-	-	- - -
Responsive to Contingencies	-	+	-	-	- -
Sustainable Response	-	-	-	n/a	- - -
Institutional Memory/Learning	+	+	+	0	+++
Retains Departmental Competencies	-	+	+	+	++
Accountable to National Authority	+	-	-	-	- -

Table 4-2, Assessment of Prevention, Reconstruction, and Stabilization Cell in the NSC

3. Deputy National Security Advisor with Interagency Crisis Planning Teams

The Center for Strategic and International Studies through its multi-phase

examination of the United States Government's national security structure suggests a

series of initiatives to improve government performance in complex contingencies. In its

Phase 2 Report, *Beyond Goldwater-Nichols: U.S. Government and Defense Reform for a*

New Strategic Era, the study group recommends a new Deputy National Security

Advisor (DNSA) within the existing NSC to oversee and integrate interagency efforts

across the government. The NSC Deputies Committee is the primary decision-making

body that reports to the DNSA and an executive committee of senior under and assistant

secretaries would oversee day-to-day planning and operations. These senior presidential

appointees from the various departments would also assign members from their parent

organizations who are experts in regional and functional issues to staff new Interagency

Crisis Planning Teams (ICPT) during contingencies.[9]

An ICPT would work directly with the affected geographic combatant

commander and staff to integrate civilian interagency planning. When planning for and

conducting complex contingencies, the ICPT organizes into multi-disciplinary functional

teams like governance, security, rule of law, and economic development as necessary for

the specific intervention. The combatant commanders are responsible to integrate ICPT

efforts into military planning activities. For field operations, the concept calls for

interagency task forces (IATF) co-led by a Special Representative of the President and

the Commander of a military Joint Task Force designated by the combatant commander.

Together these two individuals are responsible for the planning, integration, and

execution of interagency efforts. Neither has authority over the other, but they are

expected to work together each with authority over their specific portfolio. The Special

Representative reports to president through the Secretary of State and has directive

authority over all government civilians and civilian activity in the operation. The military

commander has authority over all military activities and the chain of command remains

as codified in current law with the joint task force commander reporting through the

combatant commander and Secretary of Defense to the president. Organized along

functional lines, civilian and military members comprise the IATF staff. Furthermore,

when possible, the concept establishes the IATF early outside the operational area to

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[9] Murdock and Flournoy, *Beyond Goldwater-Nichols Phase 2 Report*, 45-54.

prepare and plan for the complex contingency. When deployed, the IATF relies on the

military joint task force for most of its support including security, communications and

logistics.
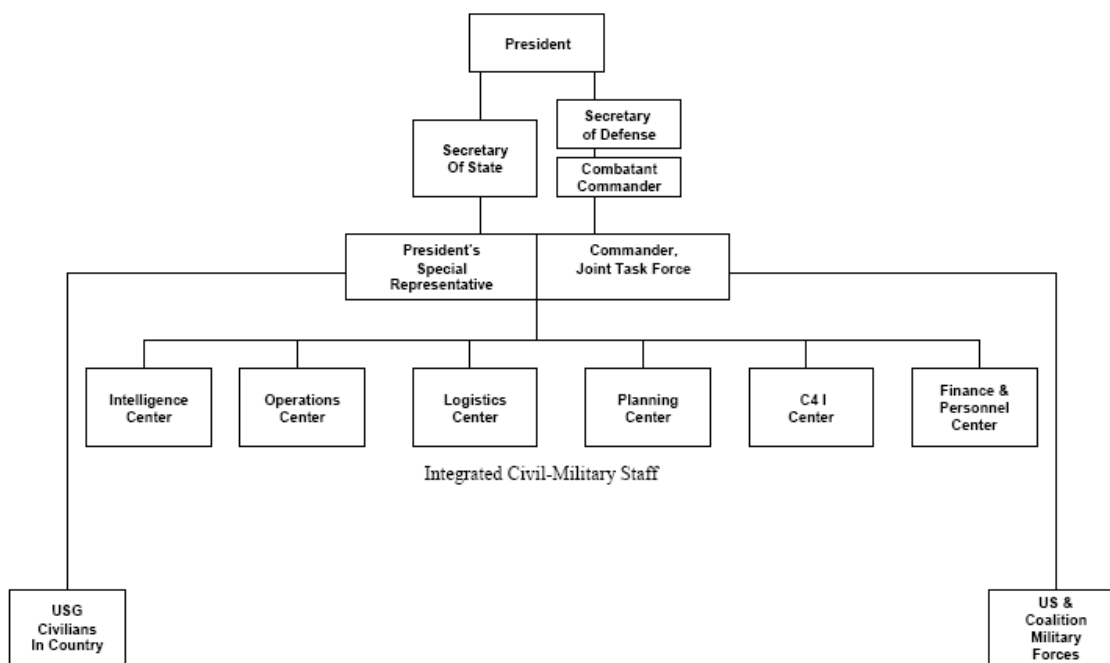
Figure 4-2, Interagency Task Force (IATF)[10]

This assessment shows a strong positive correlation for the integrating mechanism

during planning and execution of complex contingencies. The IATF concept truly

integrates all interagency efforts under a clear authority that sets priorities, directs action,

and allocates resources. However, the temporal nature of this construct causes it to trend

negatively in five of the remaining six desirable characteristics. Since the ICPT and

IATF exist primarily during emerging or on going contingencies, they are less responsive

and lack Regional Competence developed over time. Similarly, since these teams form

as required from within the existing government structure, sustainment of long-duration

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[10] Murdock and Flournoy, *Beyond Goldwater-Nichols Phase 2 Report*, 49.

interventions requires dipping into the well for each subsequent personnel rotation. In

addition, the dissolution of the teams at the end of the contingency prevents true

institutional learning and memory beyond those individual team members with

immediate experience in the particular intervention.

Desirable Characteristic	Trait 1	Trait 2	Trait 3	Trait 4	Overall Score
Integrating Mechanism	+	+	+	+	++++
Regional Competence	-	+	-	-	- -
Responsive to Contingencies	-	-	0	+	-
Sustainable Response	-	-	+	n/a	-
Institutional Memory/Learning	0	-	-	-	- - -
Retains Departmental Competencies	+	0	-	+	+
Accountable to National Authority	+	0	-	-	-

Table 4-3, Assessment of DNSA, ICPT and IATF

4. White House Command through a new Director for National Security

Developed by the Project on National Security Reform (PNSR), this option

retains centralized management of complex contingencies under direct White House

command through a new Director for National Security (DNS). The DNS receives

support from a large organization, the Office of the Director for National Security

(ODNS), with a robust multi-disciplinary capability for issue management. The ODNS

resides within a new organization, the President's Security Council (PSC), which

subsumes the staffs and responsibilities of the current National Security and Homeland

Security Councils. The DNS chairs both the Principles' and Deputies' Committees of the

PSC while his subordinate "office directors" chair the Policy Coordination Committees

(PCC). In short, the DNS who requires Senate confirmation assumes super-cabinet status

and legal authority to direct the departments and agencies of the federal government in national security matters on behalf of the president. The DNS supported by the ODNS establishes national security objectives, conducts planning, sets priorities, tasks departments and agencies, and monitors and assesses mission performance. Congress authorizes and appropriates budgets for specific national security missions to allow the DNS to quickly resource contingencies for small or emerging missions. Field execution in complex contingencies remains the purview of the various national security departments and agencies although, in a twist to the status quo, the ambassadors and country teams report directly to the regional PCCs within the PSC.[11]
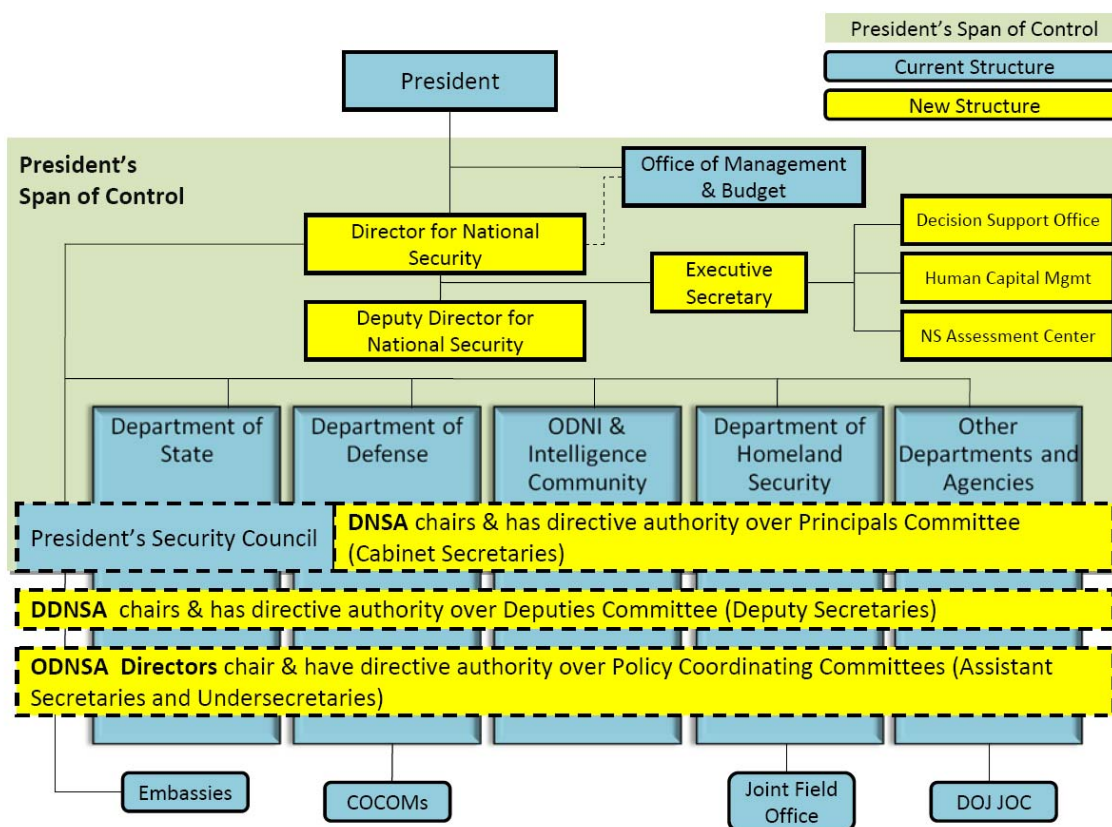

Figure 4-3, White House Command Option (PNSR)[12]

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[11] Locher, *Project on National Security Reform*, 482-491.

[12] Ibid., 486.

An empowered Director of National Security provides a high degree of interagency integration at the national level and is clearly accountable to national authority, in both the executive and legislative branches. It centralizes the integration of strategy, planning, and resourcing in a single authority at the very top of the government; and the direct linkage to the president significantly reduces the probability of confusion or misinterpretation of policy. Furthermore, through the confirmation and appropriations processes, Congress remains fully engaged in national security issues. However, with regard to interagency integration at the operational and mission execution levels, this option does little to change the status quo. In the field, this option continues to rely on a designated lead agency or czar. In the absence of either, recent history indicates that ad hoc organizations, proven largely ineffective, will arise to fill the void. The integration strength this option provides at the top is offset by its weakness at the bottom.

In addition, this option correlates negatively with developing regional competence and relationships, and it will struggle to maintain a sustainable response over a long-duration intervention. The Washington-based location vice a forward presence significantly inhibits the organization from developing a depth of understanding for each geographical region to include the subtle issues of each country and culture. It is a largely accepted notion that all politics are local, and nowhere is that more prevalent than in the developing world where many future conflicts are likely to rise. Although large, this organization's ability to sustain a high level of performance under the demands of multiple, near-simultaneous contingencies is doubtful. The span of control to conduct issue management within the NSC for all the geographic regions may not be feasible.

Desirable Characteristic	Trait 1	Trait 2	Trait 3	Trait 4	Overall Score
Integrating Mechanism	0	+	0	0	+
Regional Competence	-	0	-	-	- - -
Responsive to Contingencies	0	-	-	+	-
Sustainable Response	0	-	-	n/a	- -
Institutional Memory/Learning	-	0	0	0	-
Retains Departmental Competencies	+	0	0	+	++
Accountable to National Authority	+	+	+	+	++++

Table 4-4, Assessment of White House Command Option

5. White House Command with Vice President as National Security Manager

This option also developed by the PNSR is a variation of the White House Command option. It uses the vice president in the role of National Security Manager to reduce the span of control burden for the president. Although not a position designated by law due to constitutional issues, the vice president as the National Security Manager would oversee the national security system and supervise the DNS as described in the previous option.[13] Therefore, the assessment of this option is identical to the previous.

Overall Assessment of Washington-based Options

The Washington-based proposals do not have common trends across all options with the exception of the positive trend to retain core competencies of the departments and the negative trend of failure to develop regional expertise. Both of these trends are due to the top-centric, Washington-directed approach to crisis management these proposals follow. None of the five options has a net positive trend. Most options show positive and negative trends balancing for an overall neutral assessment.

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[13] Locher, *Project on National Security Reform*, 485.

Regionally based Approaches

There are seven regionally based organizational proposals to assess. As a practical matter, all the regional proposals support a realignment of geographic boundaries under one common government set as a point of departure. At this point, the approaches split into two groups: those that propose some form of a lead agency and those that propose an integrated form with singular authority.

1. Combatant Commands with Joint Interagency Coordination Groups

Embedding a cadre of interagency officers within the existing geographic combatant commanders' staffs is another example of an initiative widely in use now. The theory behind the Joint Interagency Coordination Group (JIACG) is very simple and one in which current practitioners attempt to work within the existing national security system to overcome its inherent obstacles. The concept embeds multi-disciplinary expertise in the form of liaison officers within the staffs of the geographic combatant commands from the departments and agencies willing to provide the officers. These liaison officers provide expertise and reach back capabilities to their parent organizations for skill sets not normally present in the Department of Defense. In return for the investment, the providing departments and agencies maintain increased situational awareness of future and on going military operations from their liaison officers on the inside.

Two combatant commands, United States Southern Command and United States Africa Command have taken this concept to the next level. Southern Command through

its Joint Interagency Task Force South works to interdict illicit trafficking on a regional scale through an integrated interagency staff and cross-departmental organizations that fully collaborate in planning and execution. The task force makes extraordinary efforts to share intelligence among all agencies involved and executes operations using supported and supporting relationships as allowed by United States law for each situation. Africa Command takes integration a step further by fully integrating the entire combatant command staff with a mix of interagency civilians and military officers. In this staff construct, it is just as likely to see military officers working for civilian leaders, as it is to see civilians working for military leaders. Due to its infancy as of this writing, it is too early to rate the actual effectiveness of the new Africa Command.

However, an assessment of the JIACG concept is possible using its structural and organizational aspects. Since the interagency officers assigned in the combat commands are few in number from the individual departments and agencies, and since they do not come with departmental resources or directive authority, the benefit of the exchange is largely one of knowledge and expertise. The exchange is meaningful for both military and civilian personnel in that individually they gain insights into the broad cultural differences across the government and they benefit from lessons learned and best practices. However, the JIACG construct is neutral to slightly negative in its correlation to the desirable organizational characteristics. The concept is largely unchanged from the status quo. It does not provide authority to integrate interagency efforts. No single authority can establish objectives, task departments and agencies or direct resources. In addition, since the civilian numbers are so few, the government does not really establish a significant body of interagency experts with regional knowledge for rapid response to

emerging crises. In practice, all government departments remain responsible to execute

their functions in complex contingencies. There is no one authority clearly in charge, but

it does have the appearance of continuing to weight United States foreign engagement in

the military element of power vice a more balanced approach. Furthermore, since the

liaison officer numbers are small, sustaining the interagency response is problematic and

requires pulling assets from across the entire government. Under this construct,

institutional learning and adaptability are only temporal and last as long as the

participants remain within the government and their organizations.

Desirable Characteristic	Trait 1	Trait 2	Trait 3	Trait 4	Overall Score
Integrating Mechanism	0	-	0	0	-
Regional Competence	0	0	0	0	0
Responsive to Contingencies	-	0	-	0	- -
Sustainable Response	-	-	0	n/a	- -
Institutional Memory/Learning	0	0	0	0	0
Retains Departmental Competencies	0	0	0	+	+
Accountable to National Authority	0	0	0	0	0

Table 4-5, Assessment of Joint Interagency Coordination Group (JIACG)

2. Joint Interagency Groups in combination with Combatant Commands

The concept of combining Joint Interagency Groups with a reduced number of

regional combatant commanders is the creation of James Carafano, a research fellow with

The Heritage Foundation. Carafano argues that the current Unified Command Plan that

outlines command responsibilities within the Department of Defense is a relic of the Cold

War. A more appropriate vehicle for the new security environment is a United States

Engagement Plan crafted by the NSC that pertains to the whole of government, not just

the military commands. Under this construct, the regional military commands should reduce to three: a new US-NATO Command for Europe, a new US Northeast Asia Command for a portion of the current Pacific Command, and retention of the current Northern Command. Three new Joint Interagency Groups, or InterGroups, comprised of resources from multiple agencies cover the remainder of the world: Latin America, Africa and the Middle East, and South and Central Asia. The InterGroups' structures are unique in that each has priority missions based on the specific United States interests that emanate from its region. For example, the Latin America InterGroup's main mission would focus on illicit trafficking of drugs, arms and human cargo.[14]

Each InterGroup would have an integrated interagency staff including military members. If required for military operations, the military portion of the staff would disengage and form the core element of a joint task force. For short duration conflicts, military operations are commanded by three reorganized functional commands within the United States—Strike Command, Operational Support Command, and Transportation Command. For a large-scale operation similar to Iraq or Afghanistan, a standing JTF established for the specific mission would command the operation.[15]

At the heart of the assessment of this option is the very significant assumption about risk and the nature of the strategic environment in the near future. If the assumption is correct, the United States' risk posture using InterGroups may be acceptable. If the assumption is wrong, then the United States strategic risk may be decisively misplaced. As described, the InterGroup concept trends positively for the

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[14] James Carafano, "Missions, Responsibilities, and Geography: Rethinking How the Pentagon Commands the World," *Backgrounder*, no. 1792 (August 2004): 1-5.
[15] Ibid., 5.

desirable integrating mechanism characteristic. Yet, since the civilian interagency

construct resides only in the three InterGroup regions and not in the two overseas

combatant command regions, the overall trend is only slightly positive. Again, because

the whole of government is present in only three regions, the concept does not ensure the

development of regional expertise worldwide nor does it ensure a rapid interagency

response to all potential situations. During complex contingencies, sustaining an

interagency response is problematic in the combatant command regions that do not have

the civilian resources available to the InterGroups. In addition, although this model

preserves core departmental capabilities, the military chain of command is convoluted in

the regions absent a combatant commander. Finally, some level of national

accountability is present since the leaders of both InterGroups and combatant commands

are subject to the Senate confirmation process, but overall unity of command is difficult

in this concept particularly with respect to integration of civilian and military efforts.

Desirable Characteristic	Trait 1	Trait 2	Trait 3	Trait 4	Overall Score
Integrating Mechanism	0	0	+	+	++
Regional Competence	0	0	0	0	0
Responsive to Contingencies	-	-	0	0	- -
Sustainable Response	0	0	+	n/a	+
Institutional Memory/Learning	0	0	0	0	0
Retains Departmental Competencies	+	+	+	-	++
Accountable to National Authority	0	+	0	+	++

Table 4-6, Assessment of Joint Interagency Groups

3. Joint Interagency Commands

This concept takes the Carafano construct of Joint Interagency Groups a step further by eliminating all existing regional combatant commands and replacing them with permanent Joint Interagency Commands (JIACOMs) in all geographic regions.[16] Jeffrey Buchanan, Maxie Davis and Lee Wight argue that the Carafano approach does not sufficiently create multi-disciplinary capabilities across all regions in which the United States has national security interests. In this proposal, civilian-led interagency organizations with full authority over all United States Government activities within their specified regions report to the president through the NSC.

All government personnel and resources within a region are assigned to the Joint Interagency Command (JIACOM), which is led by a highly experienced senior civilian. Since regional military forces are also assigned to the JIACOM, a four-star military deputy may be appropriate. The NSC establishes and coordinates national policy across the various interagency regional commands, but the JIACOMs develop strategy, conduct planning, assign tasks and direct resources to accomplish national security objectives with full authority over all agencies operating in their regions. This directive authority includes military forces and the ambassadors and country teams in their regions.

The JIACOM's assigned military forces, tailored for regional conditions, maintain Title 10, United States Code, command channels to the president. However, the concept is unclear under what conditions and missions the JIACOM retains directive authority for military activities and under what conditions it shifts command of forces to a theater

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[16] Jeffrey Buchanan, Maxie Davis and Lee Wight, "Death of the Combatant Command? Toward a Joint Interagency Approach," *Joint Force Quarterly*, no. 52 (1st Quarter 2009): 92-96.

commander directed by the Secretary of Defense and the president. For execution at the field level, the JIACOM would establish a Joint Interagency Task Force to manage contingencies.[17] The size of the JIACOMs appears sufficient to spin off multiple interagency task forces or at least the core elements to manage a number of simultaneous contingencies.

The overall assessment of this option trends strongly positive in all character traits. By consolidating all interagency expertise, resources and activities under a single integrating authority, the JIACOM is well postured to manage complex contingencies effectively. The forward presence and permanent nature of the organization allows it to develop a depth of expertise and foster long-term relationships in its assigned region. This postures a robust multi-disciplinary staff for rapid response to emerging crises and allows a sustained response during complex contingencies. Because the organization continues to operate as designed after conflict termination, it is able to institutionalize and adapt to lessons learned during previous interventions.

In addition, since the departments and agencies staff the JIACOM, it can provide feedback to source agencies to improve personnel training and resource acquisitions. Accountability to national authority is also strong since the reporting chain is almost directly to the president, and Senate confirmation of the lead civilian and periodic testimony ensures the Congress is in play.

The only concern and negative trend in this construct is with respect to the command and direction of military forces. Uncertainty as to when and under what conditions the civilian may direct military forces, and under what conditions the senior

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[17] Buchanan, Davis and Wight, "Death of the Combatant Command," 92-96.

commander directs military forces is a cause for concern. Maintaining robust military forces, regionally postured, under direct command of national authorities may be a more suitable variation to this proposal and in keeping with long-standing tradition and United States law. Otherwise, this course of action appears very strong.

Desirable Characteristic	Trait 1	Trait 2	Trait 3	Trait 4	Overall Score
Integrating Mechanism	+	+	+	+	++++
Regional Competence	+	+	+	+	++++
Responsive to Contingencies	+	+	+	+	++++
Sustainable Response	+	+	+	n/a	+++
Institutional Memory/Learning	+	+	+	+	++++
Retains Departmental Competencies	+	+	+	-	++
Accountable to National Authority	+	+	0	+	+++

Table 4-7, Assessment of Joint Interagency Commands

4. Integrated Regional Centers

This option also by the PNSR shifts issue management and interagency integration for contingencies to the regional level. It empowers new regional directors, who lead Integrated Regional Centers (IRC), to manage national policy matters and contingencies within their regions. A small President's Security Council (same as described in the White House Command option) exists to advise and assist the president with strategy and policy issues while the regional directors manage the day-to-day issues associated with implementing national policy. The IRCs develop and foster lasting relationships within their region to promote United States policy and national security objectives.

All departments and agencies with national security missions abroad report directly to the regional directors for coordination and direction in matters related to the

specific regions. The exception is that the military chain of command for forces engaged in operations remains vested in the regional combatant commanders. However, the combatant commanders coordinate all peacetime activities with the regional director. To strengthen this coordination relationship, an option is to co-locate the headquarters of the IRC and combatant commanders. In fact, basing the IRCs outside of Washington, D.C. and maintaining a forward presence where permissible is the preferred option.

This option closely represents the concept behind the regional combatant commands established by the 1986 Goldwater-Nichols Defense Reorganization Act. Regional directors are Senate-confirmed, presidential appointees senior in rank to all ambassadors and chiefs of mission within their region. The IRC reporting chain is to the president and coordination of issues goes through the principles and deputies' committees—regional directors are PSC attendees when invited. The current regional Policy Coordination Committees in the PSC are no longer required.

Similar to the combatant commands, the IRCs would have large staffs (500-1000 people, situational dependent) and concentrate on establishing relationships and advancing United States policy goals in their respective areas of responsibility. The national security departments and agencies provide the people, expertise and resources for the IRCs to employ according to its approved regional strategy. For contingencies, an IRC would form a regional task force for issue management at the mission level. For budgeting purposes, Congress would approve an operating budget for each IRC headquarters, but funding for regional missions would still go through the individual departments and agencies in accordance with an integrated IRC plan.[18]

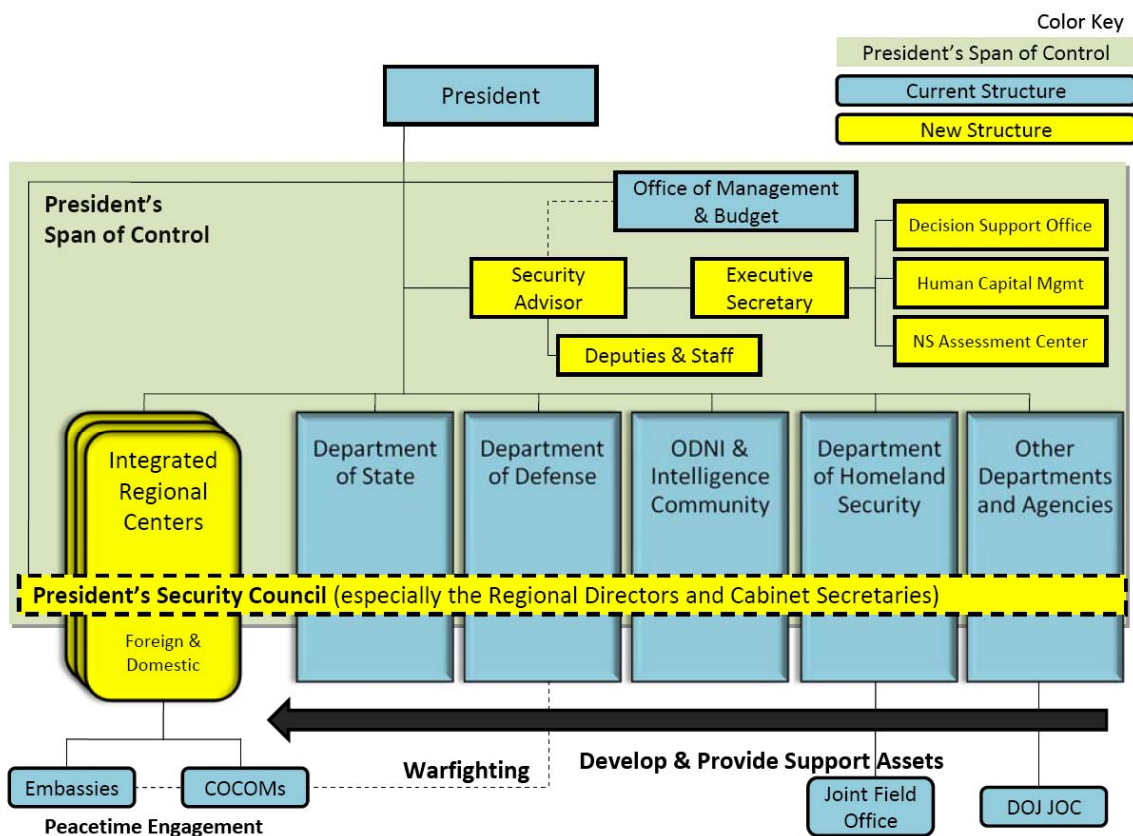[18] Locher, *Project on National Security Reform*, 492-506.

Figure 4-4, Integrated Regional Centers (PNSR)[19]

The assessment of this option is that it strongly identifies with most of the

desirable organizational traits. It integrates the interagency at all levels, particularly for

regional matters. It develops and maintains credible regional expertise including

consistent forward presence, and it is postured for rapid response to complex

contingencies. Furthermore, due to the size of its permanent staff, it can sustain efforts in

long-duration interventions. Although a full assessment of the potential cultural

transformation to a common interagency approach is not currently possible, this option

provides the right organizational structure to ensure long-term institutional learning and

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[19] Locher, *Project on National Security Reform*, 500.

adaptation. This option also relies on and protects core departmental competencies, and ensures the military chain of command for operations remains intact. Finally, this construct ensures accountability to both the executive and legislative branches. Overall, this extremely strong option preserves traditional military command channels under current United States law.

Desirable Characteristic	Trait 1	Trait 2	Trait 3	Trait 4	Overall Score
Integrating Mechanism	+	+	+	+	++++
Regional Competence	+	+	+	+	++++
Responsive to Contingencies	+	+	+	+	++++
Sustainable Response	+	+	+	n/a	+++
Institutional Memory/Learning	+	+	0	0	++
Retains Departmental Competencies	+	+	+	+	++++
Accountable to National Authority	+	+	-	+	++

Table 4-8, Assessment of Integrated Regional Centers

5. Integrated Regional Centers with DOS Lead

The significant attribute of this PNSR variation to the Integrated Regional Center is that the IRC reports to and through the Department of State as the designated lead agency. The under secretaries of the regional interest bureaus are elevated to head the IRCs and report directly to the Secretary of State. Additionally, the under secretaries lead their respective regional PCCs within the PSC while the Principles and Deputies Committees provide oversight.[20]

It is unclear under this construct where IRCs would base and what true directive authority they would have over other national security departments and agencies once

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[20] Locher, *Project on National Security Reform*, 502-503.

removed from the cabinet room. The relationship between the combatant commanders appears to be similar, but the limited authority over combatant command peacetime activities seems questionable. Furthermore, there is a considerable risk this organizational construct would lean heavily toward the Department of State culture instead of developing its own integrated interagency approach. Overall, this approach retains some of positive characteristics from the base case, but introduces an unnecessary bureaucratic layer that exacerbates existing problems within the current national security system and its organizations.

Desirable Characteristic	Trait 1	Trait 2	Trait 3	Trait 4	Overall Score
Integrating Mechanism	0	+	0	0	+
Regional Competence	0	+	+	0	++
Responsive to Contingencies	0	+	+	+	+++
Sustainable Response	+	+	+	n/a	+++
Institutional Memory/Learning	0	0	0	0	0
Retains Departmental Competencies	-	0	0	+	0
Accountable to National Authority	-	0	-	+	-

Table 4-9, Assessment of Integrated Regional Centers with DOS as Lead Agency

6. Regional Interests Bureaus

Jeffrey Gardner, a graduate student in the Strategic Intelligence Program at the Defense Intelligence Agency, developed an interesting variation similar to both the Joint Interagency Commands and the Integrated Regional Centers. The Regional Interests Bureau (RIB) concept differs primarily in the organization of the structure more than any thing else. Like the other two, the RIB is a regionally based organization with a permanent multi-agency structure led by a very senior presidential special representative

or special envoy. The president's special representative has full directive authority to develop strategy, plan, task, and commit resources from all departments and agencies of the government to execute United States policy within his region. However, instead of an integrated cross-functional staff, the RIB is comprised of modular cells organized functionally like the national security departments and agencies in Washington.[21]

Senior executives at the assistant secretary and deputy director level lead the modular staff cells. The staff cells, like their parent departments, represent the elements of national power. For example, an Assistant Secretary of State and USAID leads the Diplomatic Cell for the RIB. Likewise, a Commander, United States "Region" Command, leads the Military staff. Figure 4-5 shows an example of the RIB organization. The modular cells report to and function under the direction of the president's special representative. They become the execution agents of the RIB and receive personnel and resource support from their parent agencies similar to the way the military service departments in the Department of Defense provide support for field forces under the command of the regional combatant commanders.

Although the president's special representative is the single authority for decision-making, execution, and reporting in the region, the RIB construct facilitates a dual information chain that allows the modular cell chiefs to report to their parent organizations in addition to the special representative. This reporting is for coordination and information only, and does not entail authorities that usurp the power of the president's special representative. What is unclear, however, and not fully parsed in the

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[21] Jeffrey V. Gardner, "Fight the 'Away Game' as a Team: Organizing for Regional Interagency Policy Implementation," *American Intelligence Journal* (Autumn/Winter 2005): 51-60.

RIB concept is the military chain of command. As it now appears, the regional military

commander reports through the special representative.
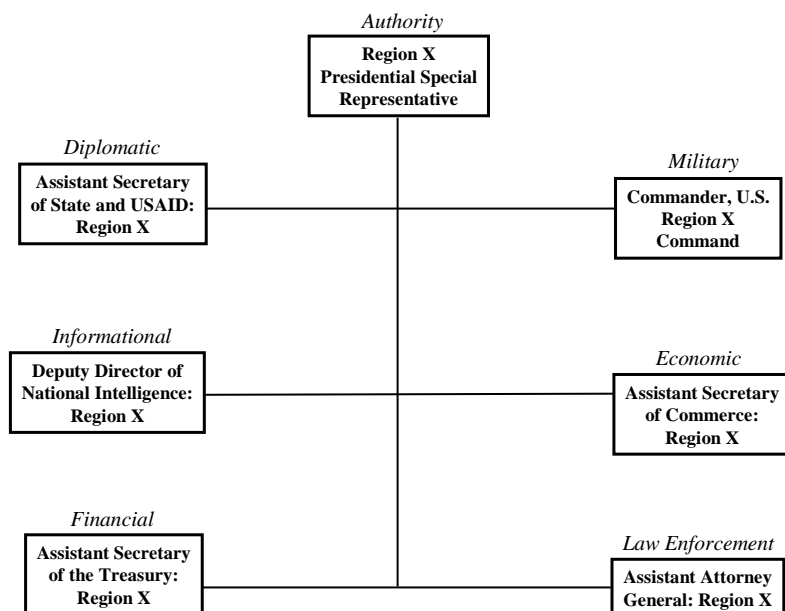
Model Regional Interests Bureau

Authority
Region X
Presidential Special
Representative

Diplomatic
Assistant Secretary
of State and USAID:
Region X

Military
Commander, U.S.
Region X
Command

Informational
Deputy Director of
National Intelligence:
Region X

Economic
Assistant Secretary
of Commerce:
Region X

Financial
Assistant Secretary
of the Treasury:
Region X

Law Enforcement
Assistant Attorney
General: Region X

Figure 4-5, Regional Interests Bureau (Gardner)[22]

An assessment of the RIB shows that it correlates strongly positive in six of the

seven desirable characteristics. The integrating mechanism vested in the special

representative has complete directive authority, and the forward deployed permanent staff

allows a depth of regional expertise that can respond rapidly to emerging crises. The

organization is sufficient to sustain long-duration interventions and capable of

institutional learning and improvement. Since the leadership reports directly to the

president and the key leaders must undergo Senate confirmation, the organization is

highly accountable to national authority. There are only two questionable traits. The

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[22] Gardner, "Fight the 'Away Game' as a Team," 57.

modular cell construct may inhibit the full potential of developing an interagency culture within the RIB. This may not result in a problem, yet it could lead to interagency competition similar to recent experiences in overseas interventions. However, the issue of most concern is the potentially convoluted military chain of command that changes the traditional relationship between field commanders and the president. Until resolved, this trait trends negatively.

Desirable Characteristic	Trait 1	Trait 2	Trait 3	Trait 4	Overall Score
Integrating Mechanism	+	+	+	+	++++
Regional Competence	+	+	+	+	++++
Responsive to Contingencies	+	+	+	+	++++
Sustainable Response	+	+	+	n/a	+++
Institutional Memory/Learning	+	+	+	+	++++
Retains Departmental Competencies	0	+	+	-	+
Accountable to National Authority	+	+	+	+	++++

Table 4-10, Assessment of Regional Interests Bureaus

7. Regional Ambassadors

Although not fully developed, Sunil Desai of the Hoover Institution, Stanford University, proposes the concept of regional ambassadors and permanent interagency staffs aligned along a common government regional framework. He draws parallels to the transformation within the Department of Defense and the military services subsequent to the 1986 Goldwater-Nichols Act that forced "jointness" on the military. The basis of the proposal is that a true interagency culture will not form naturally from the repeated interagency efforts of recent history without fundamentally changing the organizations, doctrine and training within the government. Although it is important to retain core

departmental competencies, an integrated regional staff directed by a single authority is essential to develop an interagency culture.   Regional ambassadors, senior to all individual country ambassadors in their region, would be the single authority and link to national authorities and leaders of the other agencies.[23] Presumably, this concept retains the current military chain of command and all funding and resource appropriations continue as is through the individual departments and agencies.

It is difficult to provide a full assessment of the Regional Ambassador approach since it is not a fully developed concept. Therefore, assumptions for missing components are necessary to assess the potential of the proposal. The first assumption is that the regional ambassador and regional combatant commander maintain separate chains of command, report directly to the president, but do not have absolute authority over each other. The second assumption is that the interagency staff and teams supporting the regional ambassadors are robust organizations, fully resourced from the national security departments and agencies by statute.

Given these assumptions, the overall trend of this proposal is positive. The only drawbacks are neutral trends for the integrating mechanism and institutional learning characteristics. The natural division of the military and non-military organizations of the regional structure affects these characteristics. The division inhibits the development of a fully integrated interagency culture and the regional organization is subject to the resultant interagency competition and misconceptions. The other characteristics are highly positive. A permanent, robust staff deployed forward would develop a depth of regional expertise and respond rapidly to emerging crises. Similarly, a sizeable staff can

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[23] Desai, *Solving the Interagency Puzzle*, 5-6.

sustain itself over long duration interventions. The core competencies of the individual departments and agencies are preserved, and the span of control for the president is greatly reduced since individual country ambassadors report through the regional ambassadors, not directly to the president. Overall, this proposal has merit.

Desirable Characteristic	Trait 1	Trait 2	Trait 3	Trait 4	Overall Score
Integrating Mechanism	0	0	0	0	0
Regional Competence	+	0	+	+	+++
Responsive to Contingencies	+	+	+	0	+++
Sustainable Response	+	+	+	n/a	+++
Institutional Memory/Learning	0	0	0	0	0
Retains Departmental Competencies	+	+	+	+	++++
Accountable to National Authority	0	+	0	+	++

Table 4-11, Assessment of the Regional Ambassador concept

Overall Assessment of Regionally based Options

Of the seven regional approaches, the options that employed a single-authority integrating mechanism and maintained a significant interagency staff permanently deployed in the region assessed strongly positive. Those options that employed a lead agency approach assessed neutral or slightly negative due primarily to the same reasons lead agency approaches faired poorly in recent overseas contingencies.

Echeloned Teams Approach

At this time, there is only one fully developed concept for using a construct of empowered multi-echelon teams. Typically, an echeloned teams approach seeks to

flatten the bureaucratic decision-making structure by creating an empowered hierarchy of multi-disciplinary teams. This is true of the PNSR approach available for assessment.

Hierarchy of Decentralized Teams

This PNSR-derived option is perhaps the most interesting and differs greatly from all previous models. In this case, the president provides strategic direction to groups of cross-functional teams empowered with full decision and directive authority over executive branch resources to manage specific national security issues. A very small President's Security Council (PSC) advises and assists the president, but the body has no directive authority for interagency coordination. All authority and trust resides in the hierarchy of empowered teams. The president provides guidance through Presidential Security Reviews convened as necessary. Therefore, this system completely replaces the current NSC structure including the Principles, Deputies, and Policy Coordination Committees.[24]

The hierarchy of teams includes top level Presidential Priority Teams to work the highest priority issues, and three varieties of echeloned teams work worldwide issues. Global Issue Teams manage issues that are broad in scope, transnational and those that tend to cross regional boundaries. Regional Issue Teams manage issues for specified regions including problems that cross into and out of their regional boundaries. Empowered Country Teams implement national policy decisions in their assigned countries similar to the current country teams, but with much greater authority. The echeloned nature of this hierarchy of teams provides for top down guidance from the next

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[24] Locher, *Project on National Security Reform*, 507-526.

higher level. For instance, the regional teams provide strategy and policy guidance to the country teams within their region and likewise, global teams provide guidance to regional teams with regard to their particular management issues.

A similar hierarchy of geographic offices provides infrastructure support to the echeloned teams. The PSC secretariat houses and supports Presidential Priority Teams and a Global Office houses and supports global issue teams. Both are located in Washington. Six to eight forward deployed regional offices support the regional issue teams. Ambassadors and the country teams support the empowered country teams.

The entire process works by setting the president's strategic direction from the top while front-line leaders make the decisions. The system must continuously update and refine itself based on lessons learned from the field. Departmental cultures, budgets and command structures give way to a culture of true collaboration instead of interagency competition and simple coordination. When faced with national security issues, the president assigns issue teams to work the day-to-day management until resolved. If necessary, multiple teams may consolidate into an ad hoc working group to examine the issue from a broader context. The president and his staff manage the entirety of the structure and "actively work to find ways to weave activity from different parts of the national security system together." [25]

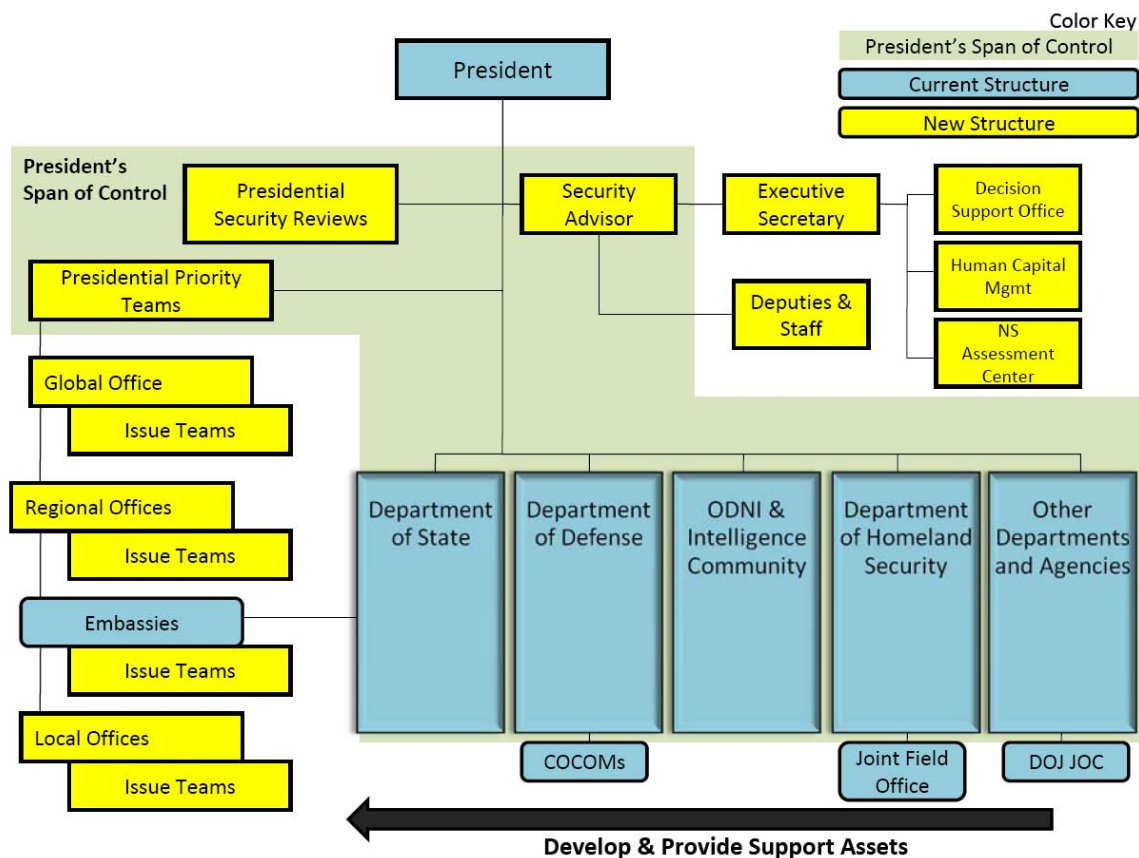[25] Locher, *Project on National Security Reform*, 522.

Figure 4-6, Distributed and Networked Teams (PNSR)[26]

The assessment of this organizational proposal is difficult and at times counterintuitive. For instance, with respect to creating an option that truly integrates and empowers the interagency team through a horizontal structure of empowered teams, the authors' application of organizational theory to the conduct of national security affairs seems to have gone too far in the opposite direction. By creating so many empowered teams with absolute decision authority, instead of solving the problem of integration by investing in a single common authority, they empowered too many with authority. If all the leaders within the hierarchy are in charge, then no one is in charge. The parallel

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[26] Locher, *Project on National Security Reform*, 519.

construct is when everything is a priority nothing is a priority. If multiple teams across the government are all making directive resource decisions, then no one really has directive authority over resources. This concept may have difficulty surviving the executive budgeting process and Congressional hearings without significant refinement. Overall as an integrating mechanism, this option correlates negatively.

With respect to developing regional expertise, the option is slightly negative. While the regional teams reside forward ostensibly to develop regional expertise, they are postured for issue management as crises arise rather than to broadly implement national policy and shape their regions on a continuing basis. They appear structured to observe day-to-day policy implementation by the embassies in their regions, but they do not appear to maintain contingency plans or manage regional development activities. Furthermore, in crises, it appears the regional and country teams may not be of sufficient size to sustain long-term intervention management without significant augmentation. Empowered regional teams must be of comparable size to the organizations in the integrated regional center concept if they are to be effective. In addition, from a national-level span of control perspective, with so many teams in existence, the entire system is too big for the president and his PSC to manage effectively. Using the PNSR's own assessment, "the disadvantage of this alternative compared to others is that it is unwieldy and the easiest to unravel."[27] However, the regional and empowered country teams by their locality are ready to respond rapidly to crises as they arise which is a desirable positive trait.

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[27] Locher, *Project on National Security Reform*, 526.

With respect to developing institutional memory, this option is neutral. The positives are that the teams by their specific issue design will learn and improve insofar as the teams' specific issues are concerned. However, since they are focused narrowly in their own lanes (which distinguish them from the lead agency or czar models), there is no mechanism in the system to provide feedback, best practices, and lessons learned for the national security system, as a whole, to adapt. An individual team may train with its current assigned personnel, but broad institutional learning may be impossible.

This option is also neutral with respect to preserving core departmental and agency competencies. In fact, this option breaks down departmental cultures by design, although the military chain of command remains intact. Finally, the hierarchy of teams correlates slightly negative in the area of accountability to national authority. Issue management in the field and perhaps even at the region appears to have multiple layers of reporting prior to reaching the president, although, it is unclear what the intent is during crises. Again, this is counterintuitive to what one would expect from the intent of this design. In addition, the unclear role of Congress in the confirmation and hearing process is neutral or slightly negative. Apparently only the senior issue group executives are Senate confirmed presidential appointees.

Desirable Characteristic	Trait 1	Trait 2	Trait 3	Trait 4	Overall Score
Integrating Mechanism	0	-	-	0	- -
Regional Competence	-	-	0	+	-
Responsive to Contingencies	+	+	-	+	++
Sustainable Response	-	-	-	n/a	- - -
Institutional Memory/Learning	+	+	-	-	0
Retains Departmental Competencies	0	0	-	+	0
Accountable to National Authority	-	0	+	-	-

Table 4-12, Assessment of Hierarchy of Decentralized Teams

Organizational Assessment Conclusion

The regionally based approaches, particularly those that employ permanent

forward deployed interagency staffs under a single integrating authority, show a

pronounced positive trend across the desirable organizational characteristics. In addition,

this strong positive trend provides a marked advantage almost exclusively for the regional

approaches. Although some of the Washington-based approaches have positive traits, it

appears the optimal candidates emerge from the regional approaches. The hierarchal

teams approach is fraught with negative trends and does not appear to be a viable option

as currently described. Table 4-13 summarizes the overall assessments for the proposals.

The next chapter uses aspects of the regionally based approaches to develop a

recommended organizational structure that optimizes the desirable characteristics.

Characteristic / Proposal	Integration Mechanism	Regional Competence	Responsive	Sustainable	Institutional Learning	Retains Core Competence	Accountable to National Authority
S/CRS	- - -	- - -	+	+	0	++++	+
PRSC	- -	- - -	- -	- - -	+++	++	- -
DNSA/ICPT	++++	- -	-	-	- - -	+	-
WH Command	+	- - -	-	- -	-	++	++++
COCOM/JIACG	-	0	- -	- -	0	+	0
COCOM/JIG	++	0	- -	+	0	++	++
JIACOM	++++	++++	++++	+++	++++	++	+++
IRC	++++	++++	++++	+++	++	++++	++
IRC/DOS Lead	+	++	+++	+++	0	0	-
RIB	++++	++++	++++	+++	++++	+	++++
Regional AMB	0	+++	+++	+++	0	++++	++
Hierarchy Teams	- -	-	++	- - -	0	0	-

Table 4-13, Consolidated Assessment of Organizational Proposals

"Americans should not settle for incremental, ad hoc adjustments to a system designed generations ago for a world that no longer exists. Good people can overcome bad structures. They should not have to."[1]

The 9/11 Commission Report

Chapter 5: The Regional Approach for Unified Action

The last chapter examined thirteen current proposals to reform the national security system and its organizations in order to identify options that would ensure the United States intervenes more effectively in complex contingencies overseas through an integrated, whole of government approach. Using the seven desirable characteristics established in Chapter 3, the analysis revealed the strengths and weaknesses of each proposal. This chapter uses the favorable aspects of the various proposals, particularly the regionally based options, to recommend a new organizational construct. The chapter then describes the new organization, its functionality, and the requirements to implement the new design.

Why focus on the Region to Reorganize National Security?

The analysis in the last chapter indicates the regionally based approaches are more effective than the Washington-based approaches since they address the fundamental problems of interagency integration holistically, top to bottom. Some of the Washington-based solutions create a decisive integrating mechanism at the national level, but they fail to address systemic problems at the mid and lower levels. Although strong at the top,

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[1] Kean and Hamilton, *9/11 Commission Report*, 399.

these proposals do little to change the status quo. Thus, the current system that encourages ad hoc organizations at the operational and field level will continue unabated under a centralized, Washington-based national security structure. The regionally based options solve this problem by formally integrating interagency efforts at all levels.

A second reason to focus on the regionally based approaches is that they provide a depth of regional expertise and synthesis to feed policy recommendations from the bottom up—an input lacking in the current system that relies on multiple Washington-based departments and agencies to process and interpret hundreds of field reports. Although any viable option to reform the current system requires a strong, capable National Security Council to support the president with national strategy and policy formulation, the NSC does not see issues very well from a regional perspective. The consistent forward presence envisioned by the regionally based approaches would provide detailed regional and country insights for the NSC to better formulate national strategy and policy.

In addition, the regional proposals focus multi-disciplinary capabilities at the source of problems in a way that allows comprehensive execution of national policy initiatives to avert future conflict or to manage them should they arise. This is the third reason to focus on the regionally based approaches. While the regional approaches allow continuous management and pursuit of United States interests, they also posture capability for rapid response to emerging crises, something an Interagency Task Force launched from the NSC is not likely to do very well.

A fourth and very important reason to focus on the regional approaches is that they provide a distinct national security structure with clear lines of authority that are not

overly cumbersome. The effectiveness of the regional approach as it relates to national decision-making is that it provides a relatively limited number of strategically placed senior leaders to share the president's burden of interagency integration. This is in stark contrast to the large number of empowered teams and leaders envisioned by the hierarchy of teams model that requires management of a multitude of geographic and functionally aligned focus issues. The regional approach provides the president expert advice from a limited number of managers immersed in their regions and able to provide well-developed policy advice. Finally, the regional approach provides a clear, understandable structure for international audiences and demonstrates true commitment to regional issues rather than temporary responses to emergencies. Moving the debate forward, the best options to consider formulating a new national security system originate from the regionally based models.

Designing a New Regional Organization

Three of the regional proposals rate consistently high across most of the seven characteristics desirable in a new organizational construct. The Joint Interagency Commands (JIACOM), Integrated Regional Centers (IRC), and Regional Interests Bureaus (RIB) outscore the other regionally based approaches by a wide margin, and show the greatest potential to improve the government's performance in overseas contingencies. Therefore, this chapter focuses on these three proposals and designing an optimal organizational structure from a combination of the best attributes from each.

For the essential element, the integrating mechanism, all three scored equally high in their ability to integrate the elements of national power under a single empowered

authority. They invest full authority in a single individual to establish policy, conduct planning, task departments and agencies, and direct cross-departmental resources to accomplish national policy goals within their region. Therefore, the presidentially appointed, Senate confirmed senior leader becomes the central point of contact in his region to represent United States national policy and interests.

The distinguishing characteristic among the three, however, is command of military forces. The JIACOM creates an unclear military chain of command, or in the best case, an extra echelon of command. This causes unnecessary delay and perhaps risk, when the president requires accurate, timely recommendations and action from the military element of power. The IRC and RIB options preserve the direct linkage between the regional military commander and the national command authorities. While the RIB option pairs the regional ambassador and the combatant commander as essentially equal, the IRC concept integrates the military arm into the region structure better. Under the IRC, the military chain of command for forces engaged in combat is unaltered from current statute. During combat, the combatant commander coordinates activities with the IRC, but for all peacetime activities like security cooperation and engagement, the head of the IRC sets the agenda and is the directive authority. All considered, the IRC approach with its senior civilian leader is the best option for the integrating mechanism.

The next three required characteristics—regional competence, responsiveness to contingencies, and sustainable response—all require a large, multi-disciplinary organization with a significant and continuous forward presence. Developing regional expertise, planning for development activities and contingencies, and fostering long-term relationships all require the full immersion of the organization and its staff in its region of

focus. In turn, this immersion uniquely qualifies and postures the organization to rapidly

respond, sustain, and manage complex contingencies in its region.   All three

organizational approaches meet these requirements equally well. The subtle difference is

in the structure and composition of the staff.

The JIACOM and IRC both have large integrated interagency staffs, presumably

organized along functional lines, resourced by the national security departments and

agencies. The method of interagency personnel assignments in these models is unclear,

but it is sufficient to understand they create fully resourced and integrated staffs. The

RIB model is also vague with regard to personnel assignments, but its modular design

suggests homogenous staffing within each functional department. This may be an

incorrect inference since these models do not fully articulate how they would staff their

interagency organizations, but a functional model with cross-departmental personnel

assignments would create the best conditions to foster a common interagency culture.

The RIB model of functional departments, based on the elements of national power,

staffed with sufficient expertise to execute core departmental competencies, but with

significant interdepartmental assignments, is the best option for the organization.

A degree of stability provided by permanent organizations is required to ensure

institutional memory that allows the national security structure, both regionally and

nationally, to adapt successfully to the dynamic strategic environment. Permanent

regional organizations that learn from their day to day management of national policy

issues and learn from their experiences in complex contingencies, adjust their structures,

procedures, and staff training to improve performance. Best practices and lessons learned

also work their way back to national departments and agencies through formal and

informal means. Experienced staff officers rotating back to their home departments from
regional assignments reinforce formal reports and the need for new capabilities in the
field. Again, the three organizational proposals appear to support these characteristics to
a high degree. The functional departments of a permanent regional organization as
described above would ensure adaptability and create a common interagency culture that
learns from its mistakes. A concept the national departments and agencies would support
with competent staff and resources.

Finally, the regional organization options are accountable to national authorities
in both the executive and legislative branches. Senate confirmed presidential appointees
fill the senior leadership positions. Direct reporting to the president by the leadership
ensures national policy guidance is clear and the military chain of command is unbroken.
Again, the IRC and RIB models are better designs for the military aspect than the
JIACOM model. With respect to resources, much like the current Department of Defense
structure, the regional organizations would receive resources and funding through the
national departments and agencies in accordance with congressional appropriations for
regionally aligned mission objectives. Periodic testimony and statutory reporting from
the regional organizations would strengthen congressional oversight of the national
security system.

The Regional Affairs Center

The following proposal for a new national security structure incorporates the most
favorable organizational components identified in the previous section. The naming
convention for this recommendation is less important than its functionality, but for the

purposes of this study, the new design name is the Regional Affairs Center (RAC). The

intent is to create a top to bottom national security structure that allows interagency

integration at the strategic, operational, and field or tactical level. Correspondingly, this

design incorporates strategic direction and policy from the president, policy coordination

and field support from the national level departments and agencies, and policy advice,

integration and execution at the operational and tactical level. Figure 5-1 shows the
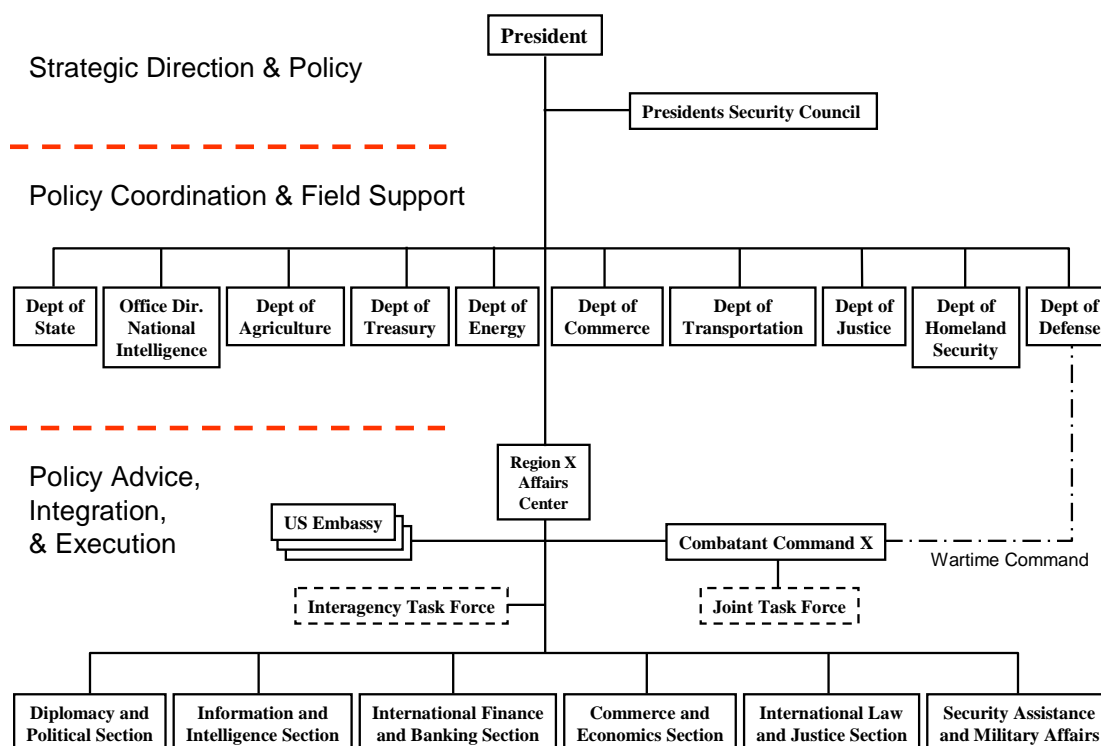
organizational structure for the new RAC.

Figure 5-1, the Regional Affairs Center

At the national level, the president remains the decision authority for strategic

direction and national policy. Borrowing from the Project on National Security Reform

(PNSR), the National Security Council and Homeland Security Councils combine to form

the new Presidents Security Council (PSC). It is not the intent of this paper to study or

recommend additional structural changes to the PSC other than its basic function. The purpose of the PSC is to provide strategy and policy advice to the president, and strategic direction and policy guidance to the national security departments, agencies, and the RAC. The PSC also monitors policy execution throughout the national security apparatus and facilitates reporting and communication between the president and RACs.

The national security departments and agencies assist with policy coordination throughout the government and support the RACs with departmental resources including personnel management, training and education, specialized equipment, and funding for specified missions. The departments and agencies do not have directive authority over region operations, but may raise disagreements to the appropriate level within the PSC. The departments and agencies continue to program, budget, and testify before Congress similar to current statute, but using a regional mission focus as their basis. Again, it is not the intent of this paper to make recommendations regarding the legislative process, specific changes to any title of United States Code, or the executive-legislative relationship.

The RACs are the point of interagency integration and execution in this proposal. Using Jeffrey Gardner's term for the integrating authority, a Special Representative of the President (SRP) is the head of the RAC. This Senate confirmed civilian appointee has full authority over all aspects of United States Government activities within his region (the noted exception is military command during combat). This authority includes establishing goals and objectives, planning, setting priorities, tasking departments and agencies, and directing resources within his region. The ambassadors and country teams from all countries in the region report to and take direction from the regional SRP. The

regional combatant commander receives direction from and coordinates all peacetime activities through the SRP. All departmental and agency field offices conduct routine coordination with and receive support from their parent national organizations, but receive directive authority for action and resources from the SRP.

The SRP heads a robust staff divided along function lines: diplomacy, information and intelligence, finance and banking, commerce and economics, international law and justice, and security assistance and military affairs. The size and composition of each section requires a separate study, but the intent is that the staff is of sufficient size to plan and manage multiple, simultaneous regional actions, and to support the formulation of multiple Interagency Task Forces for complex contingencies. The national departments and agencies are to resource the interagency staffing requirements for the RACs, and execute personnel management policies that support 3-year rotational assignments.

For crisis management and contingencies, the SRP may form an Interagency Task Force (IATF). The IATF term and recommendation comes from the Center for Strategic and International Studies, Beyond Goldwater-Nichols Phase 2 Report. During contingencies that include armed conflict or substantial military forces, the IATF and the military Joint Task Force (designated by the regional combatant commander) would integrate and coordinate their efforts under the direction of the SRP and in conjunction with the combatant commander. Command and control for all matters involving combat operations go directly from the president and Secretary of Defense to the combatant commander. However, non-combat operations to include peacetime shaping and deterrence, reconstruction and stabilization (pre- or post-conflict), and transition to civil authority all occur under the direction of the SRP. Transition conditions and military

termination criteria are determined through coordination between the president, SRP and combatant commander.

The RAC—Getting Starting

Implementation of the new national security structure requires a full study to determine personnel requirements and sourcing, diplomatic requirements, physical construction costs, multi-year funding, and statutory changes to name a few. The study alone requires time and a dedicated staff. Full implementation will require years. However, an initial operational capability could start in minimal time using borrowed staff from the Department of Defense, the embassies, and national headquarters across the other departments. The optimal geographic position for the RAC is to co-locate with or near the regional combatant command headquarters, although the goal is for the RAC to have a permanent forward presence within its region. Ultimately, full time staff for the RAC is a separate resource requirement beyond that required to staff Washington-based parent headquarters. In addition, the combat command headquarters remains unchanged.

Transition to a New National Security System

The Regional Affairs Center as the centerpiece of a new national security structure provides the best option to integrate the interagency team at all levels—the strategic, operational, and mission side of the United States Government. The RAC provides optimal integration authority and direction at the regional and field activity where recent experience shows it is missing. The RAC postures the right expertise and

resources where the next emerging crisis or complex contingency is likely to begin.

Furthermore, the permanent nature of the organization ensures the national security

system and its organizations will learn and grow through institutional processes that adapt

to the new strategic environment and rapidly changing conditions.

Organizational change is the right start, but is not sufficient by itself to transform

the national security system completely to meet the challenges of the new century. The

next chapter briefly discusses a number of complementary initiatives necessary to

implement the RAC and new national security structure fully.

"It is the opinion of the panel of senior practitioners that, without a major change in attitude and practice regarding the raising, distribution, allocation, and spending of money and related resources on U.S. national security, critical tasks now facing us as a nation will be unachievable. It is that important and that simple."[1]

RAND, 2008 Report of Senior Practitioners

Chapter 6: Complementary Initiatives to Reform the National Security System

As the previous chapter notes, the national security system requires more than a new structural organization like the Regional Affairs Center (RAC) to manage complex contingencies effectively. Organizational reform requires a number of complementary initiatives to prepare the United States Government for the diverse and dynamic challenges of today's strategic environment. This topic requires in-depth study and a deliberate decision to invest the nation's wealth into a costly and massive transformation of the government. The cultural change and inertia will be great. Many have already done significant research into this, most notably the CSIS' Beyond Goldwater-Nichols multi-phase study, the Project on National Security Reform, and the RAND Corporation's report on Integrating Instruments of Power and Influence to name a few.

The intent of this paper is to highlight some of the complementary initiatives required to implementing the RAC concept. The four initiatives covered here—leadership, increased authorizations and capacity, personnel management, and processes and systems—are not an exhaustive list, nor are they fully developed. The intent is to recognize that organizational and structural change, while centrally important, are not a

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[1] Hunter, Gnehm and Joulwan, *Integrating Instruments of Power*, 11.

full remedy for the interagency integration problems inherent in recent United States

interventions and complex contingencies overseas.

Leadership

The nature of the strategic environment and complex contingencies the United

States will encounter overseas demands the absolute best leadership and brightest minds

in the nation. These leaders require extraordinary expertise and management skills honed

only through a lifetime of professional development, study, and experience. The leader

of a RAC as the Special Representative of the President (SRP) should be a long-term

national security expert selected on merit rather than personal associations. This leader

may not necessarily come from within a closed system meritocracy, but should have

extensive national security-related experience including time in senior executive roles.

The deputy directors and assistant secretaries that head the RAC sections should come

from within the ranks based on merit. In all cases, the senior leaders, who are

presidential appointees, require Senate confirmation.

Increased Authorizations and Capacity

The personnel and resource requirements to transform the national security

system and implement the RAC are extensive. The current staffing levels and

authorizations for the national security departments and organizations are inadequate for

the new requirements. The Congress must dramatically increase personnel and funding

authorizations for the Department of State, the United States Agency for International

Development, the Departments of Justice, Commerce, and Transportation to name a few.

Personnel Management Initiatives

To create a truly integrated interagency culture, the government must develop

professional national security experts that have an expeditionary mindset and broad

educational background and experience base. A program of entry level and continuing

education must prepare national security professionals for the next assignment and

service at more senior levels. Current initiatives to create a national security university

and common curriculum are good starts and deserve increased executive-legislative

partnership to fully fund and mandate.

Cross-departmental assignments should follow advanced professional education.

Much like the reforms initiated following the 1986 Goldwater-Nichols Act, similar

legislation should require interagency assignments as a stepping-stone to future

promotion and increased responsibility. Personnel management systems must incentivize

and not penalize such assignments outside of the national security professional's parent

agency. In addition, the management system must establish and support expeditionary

deployments overseas to include adverse and hazardous duty in a reliable way.

Processes and Systems

Finally, the government must develop common processes and systems that

underwrite an effective interagency culture. A common planning and decision-making

process that includes methods to assess the effectiveness of interagency efforts is a critical first step. These processes must be at the heart of staff training exercises and reinforce professional development training at formal education venues. In addition, a common communication system with standardized classification categories is essential to ensure shared situational awareness and effective information management.

Additional Effort is Required

Again, these complementary initiatives are not exhaustive or fully developed. Others have and are looking deeper into these issues. The important point is that transformation of the national security system and its organizations will fail without substantial efforts in these initiatives and others.

"…the nation should not embrace major national security reform unless it convincingly demonstrates a deep understanding of impediments to system performance, describes a comprehensive plan for reform, and is based on recommendations that solve the problems identified. Meeting these prerequisites is essential for building a new system capable of protecting the nation in the twenty-first-century security environment."[1]

Project on National Security Reform

Chapter 7: Conclusion—Organizational Reform for Unified Action

It is clear the United States faces a new strategic environment that is volatile, uncertain and complex. It is equally clear that the national security system and its organizations are not adequately prepared to confront the diverse and dynamic challenges prevalent in overseas contingencies. Without significant reform beginning with the way the nation organizes to protect American interests overseas, the cost of repeated failure will continue to increase. The United States has a choice and it must act.

Recent government interventions overseas indicate consistent struggles with failures due largely to the nation's inability to integrate all elements of power effectively at all levels of engagement—at the strategic, operational, and field or point of mission execution. The most obvious and consistent point of failure is at the operational and field level. Ad hoc organizations without true integrating authorities are the norm rather than the exception. Transformation of the national security system that aims at the heart of the integration problem, the operational and field level, is the right first step. The regionally based approaches to organizational reform show the greatest potential to fix the

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[1] Locher, *Project on National Security Reform*, 568.

problems. The combination of the best attributes from the various regional proposals leads to a new proposal, the Regional Affairs Center.

The Regional Affairs Center, with appropriate complementary initiatives at the national level, ensures a strong empowered authority in the field that can integrate and direct all elements of national power to achieve national policy objectives through unified action. The RAC with its robust multi-disciplinary staff and its consistent forward presence is optimally postured to shape, influence and act to avert potential crises, and if necessary manage complex contingencies. The RAC facilitates the development of a common interagency culture and enhances the strengths and core competencies of the national security departments and agencies.

Equally important, the RAC construct ensures institutional memory and adaptation through experience-based learning and growth. In addition, the regional nature of the RAC concept significantly reduces strain on the system and the span of control demands on the president. While preserving the military chain of command during combat-related national emergencies, it provides the president with well-developed regional expertise and advice for strategic direction and policy development. Finally, the RAC construct continues to ensure full accountability at the national level through both executive and legislative oversight.

Transformation and organizational change comes with a price tag. Although, the RAC is the right first step it will not succeed without dramatic, complementary reform initiatives at the national level. The way the nation chooses its most senior leaders in the field must produce skilled professionals of the highest order with significant national security expertise and executive level management experience. The Congress must also

fund and resource dramatic increases in the capacity of the non-defense national security departments and agencies. Anything short of a massive increase will fail to source the requirements of the RAC fully.

In addition, the nation must change the way it develops and manages the human dimension. The nation requires national security professionals who continue their development through continuing education, cross-departmental assignments, and field experience throughout their career. The personnel management system must reward assignments outside parent agencies and mandate such experiences for career advancement. The system must also allow and facilitate an expeditionary capability that includes austere and dangerous deployments for overseas contingencies. Finally, the government must develop and implement common processes and systems that facilitate interagency planning, decision-making, and information management.

Together with adequate efforts in the complementary reforms, the Regional Affairs Center concept will transform the United States national security system into an effective, expeditionary capability able to ensure effective interagency intervention in complex contingencies overseas. The American people deserve a government that effectively protects and advances national security interests abroad, and the current system is inadequate to do so. Further delays in transformation and continued ad hoc approaches in overseas interventions will lead to more costly and embarrassing moments for the United States on the world stage. The nation's prestige and influence will continue to decline if recent history is an accurate measure. Reforming the national security system and its organizations must rise to the top of the new administration's

priorities. The regional approach using the proposed Regional Affairs Center is the right

first move.

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